



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

Friday, March 28, 2025

9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting of the General Membership

GRCA Administration Centre

Zoom Virtual Meeting

	Pages
1. Call to Order	
2. Certification of Quorum	
3. Review of Agenda	
THAT the agenda for the General Membership Meeting be approved as circulated.	
4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest	
5. Minutes of the Previous Meetings	1
THAT the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the General Membership held on February 28, 2025 be approved as circulated.	
6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes	
7. Hearing of Delegations	
8. Presentations	
9. Correspondence	
THAT Correspondence from Perth County regarding the Perth County Stewardship Program be received as information.	
a. Perth County re: Perth County Stewardship Program	14
10. 1st and 2nd Reading of By-Laws	

11. Reports:

- a. GM-03-25-36 - Chair's Report 16
THAT the Chair's Report for March 2025 be received as information.
- b. GM-03-25-32 - Additional Member Appointment, Agricultural Sector Representative 18
THAT Report Number GM-03-25-32– Additional Member Appointment, Agricultural Sector Representative be received as information.
- c. GM-03-25-37 - Board Presentation Schedule 25
THAT the Report Number GM-03-25-37 – Schedule of Board Education Presentations be received as information.
- d. GM-03-25-31 - Administrative By-law Update 27
THAT By-law 2-2025 be read a first and second time;
AND THAT staff be directed to make amendments based on discussion at the meeting.
- e. GM-03-25-35 - Senior Leadership Team 62
THAT Report Number GM-03-25-35 – Senior Leadership Team be received as information.
- f. GM-03-25-25 - Financial Summary 66
THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending February 28, 2025 be approved.
- g. GM-03-25-24 - Cash & Investment Status 85
THAT Report Number GM-03-25-24 – Cash and Investment Status – February 2025 be received as information.
- h. GM-03-25-27 - 2025 Road Site Preparation and Surface Treatment Tender 87
THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the 2025 road site preparation and surface treatment to Cornell Construction Limited of Brantford, Ontario up to the amount of \$753,047.50.00 excluding HST.

- i. GM-03-25-28 - 2025 Replacement Vehicle Purchase 89
- THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Ford Transit 1 Ton Medium Roof Cargo Van for a total amount of \$69,227.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.;
- AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Ford Transit ½ Ton Low Roof Cargo Van at a total amount of \$67,263.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.;
- AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Chevrolet Silverado ½ Ton 4WD Pickup at a total amount of \$50,264.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Finch Chevrolet Cadillac Buick GMC Ltd.;
- AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Dodge Ram Medium Duty 5500 Series Cab and Chassis at a total amount of \$91,702.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Blue Mountain Chrysler Ltd.
- j. GM-03-25-29 - Administration Centre Cleaning Services RFP Results 92
- THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority retain Corporate Mirror Inc. / Cleaning Masters Canada to provide cleaning services at the Administration Centre Complex for \$152,083.00 excluding HST over a term of three years.
- k. GM-03-25-30 - Guelph Lake Nature Centre Donor Naming Opportunities 94
- THAT Grand River Conservation Authority approves the donor naming opportunities for the Guelph Lake Nature Centre.
- l. GM-03-25-21 - Water Quality - Update on Nitrates 96
- THAT Report Number GM-03-25-21 – Water Quality – Update on Nitrates be received as information.
- m. GM-03-25-23 - Canadian Heritage River Monitoring Report 98
- THAT Report Number GM-03-25-23 – Canadian Heritage River Report 2014-2024 be received as information;
- AND THAT the 2014-2024 Monitoring Report for the Grand River be submitted to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board for review.
- n. GM-03-25-22 - Category 2 (Municipal) Programs Annual Report 173
- THAT Report Number GM-03-25-22 – Annual Report on Category 2 (Municipal) Programs be received as information.
- o. GM-03-25-33 - Annual Report of Compliance with requirements under Ontario Regulation 41/24 186
- THAT the Annual Report of Compliance with requirements under Ontario Regulation 41/24 be approved and posted on the Grand River Conservation Authority website.

p. GM-03-25-26 - Current Watershed Conditions 191

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-26 – Current Watershed Conditions as of March 18, 2025 be received as information.

q. GM-03-25-34 - Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System 200

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-34 – Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System be received as information.

12. Committee of the Whole

13. General Business

14. 3rd Reading of By-Laws

15. Other Business

16. Closed Meeting

THAT the General Membership enter a closed meeting in accordance with the Municipal Act section 239(2) for the following purposes:

- a. Proposed or pending acquisition or disposition - Various locations
- b. scientific, technical, commercial, financial information belonging to the municipality or local board
- c. litigation or potential litigation
- d. Proposed or pending acquisition or disposition - Land Use - City of Waterloo
- e. Proposed or pending acquisition or disposition - Land Use - Grand River Rafting
- f. Labour relations or employee negotiations

17. Next Meeting - April 25, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.

18. Adjourn

THAT the General Membership Meeting be adjourned.



Grand River Conservation Authority Minutes - Annual General Meeting

Date:	February 28, 2025
Time:	9:30 am
Location:	Hybrid Meeting of the General Membership GRCA Administration Centre Zoom Virtual Meeting
Members Present	Bruce Banbury, Christine Billings, Ken Yee Chew, Brian Coleman, Kevin Davis, Mike Devine, Jim Erb, Susan Foxtan, Guy Gardhouse, Gord Greavette, Lisa Hern, Daniel Lawrence, Dave Miller, Sandy Shantz, Rob Shirton, Jerry Smith, Shawn Watters, Chris White, Alex Wilson, Pam Wolf
Members Regrets	Gino Caputo, John Challinor II, Doug Craig, Colleen James, Natasha Salonen, Kari Williams
Staff	Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Beth Brown, Krista Bunn, Joel Doherty, Brandon Heyer, Janet Ivey, Kayleigh Keighan, Katelyn Lynch, Sonja Radoja, Lisa Stocco, Vahid Taleban, Pam Walther-Mabee, Benjamin Cheng, Shari Dahmer, Chris Foster-Pengelly, Louise Heyming, Eric Lalonde, Melissa Larion, Nathan Munn, Eowyn Spencer
Others	MP Valerie Bradford (Kitchener South-Hespeler), MP Brian May (Cambridge), Mayor Dorothy McCabe (Waterloo), Alan Dale, Stacey Kraemer (KPMG)

1. **Call to Order**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Chair Challinor II sent regrets for the meeting, and Vice-Chair Watters presided as Chair. The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m.

2. **Certification of Quorum**

The Secretary-Treasurer certified a quorum with more than half of the Members present. A total of 20 Members attended the meeting.

3. **Chair's Remarks**

- The Chair welcomed the Members and guests to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Grand River Conservation Authority and thanked everyone for attending.
- The Chair acknowledged that the flags at the administration centre were being flown at half-mast for the day of the Board meeting in honour of a past Board Chair, Jim

Bauer. Mr. Bauer served as the first Chair of the GRCA from 1966 when the Grand Valley Conservation Authority and the Grand River Conservation Commission amalgamated to the organization we know today. He was a long-serving member of the Board, acting as Chair until 1990. On behalf of the GRCA, we share condolences to Mr. Bauer's family.

4. Review of Agenda

25-24

Moved By Jerry Smith

Seconded By Pam Wolf

THAT the agenda for the Annual General Meeting be approved as circulated.

Carried

J.Erb joined the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests made in relation to the matters to be dealt with.

6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

25-25

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Susan Foxtton

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of January 24, 2025 be approved as circulated.

Carried

7. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

8. Hearing of Delegations

There were no Delegations.

9. Presentations

There were no Presentations.

10. Correspondence

10.1 HFH Inc. re: Concerns regarding delays in GRCA and broader permitting processes (Correspondence and GRCA response)

- D.Miller expressed concern regarding this item, and thanked staff for including their response. He then inquired about legislated response times, and if the consultant's review noted in the Chair's report is a result of this complaint. He also inquired if the consultant's report will come to the Board.

- B.Brown responded, noting that there are legislated timelines regarding notifications for permit responses and an appeal process, and there are best practices in place to respond within timeframes.
- Regarding the consultant's review, B.Brown commented that the review will look at overall process improvements over and above current practices, and noted that there have been other delays in service. Staff anticipate bringing a report to the Board in May or June.

10.2 Waterloo Federation of Agriculture re: Public appointments

- L.Hern requested that staff include this letter in March with the update on the same topic, as it is relevant to the appointment of an agricultural representative. The Chair advised that staff will take that into consideration.

25-26

Moved By Gord Greavette

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT Correspondence from HFH Inc regarding delays in GRCA permitting processes, and from the Waterloo Federation of Agriculture regarding public appointments from the agriculture sector be received as information.

Carried

11. 1st and 2nd Reading of By-Laws

None.

12. Reports:

12.1 GM-02-25-17 - Report of the Chair

The Chair asked the CAO to summarize the update in J.Challinor's absence. S.Lawson advised that the Report of the Chair contains a summary of items and discussion points since the previous Board meeting.

In addition to the notes in the report, the following additional items were shared :

- On January 28, Samantha Lawson and Sonja Radoja, Manager of Corporate Services attended Hamilton Council to be available for questions regarding the GRCA draft budget and no questions were raised for the GRCA.
- Janet Ivey, Manager of Water Resources, has begun meeting with municipal counterparts to discuss updating the collaborative 2014 Grand River Water Management Plan. The Board will receive a report on the scope and process for the update in the spring.
- Katelyn Lynch, Manager of Water Control Infrastructure, is hosting a Public Safety Around Dams workshop through the Canadian Dam Association. Attendance is limited to watershed municipalities that own or operate dams and will benefit managers and operators involved in decision-making related to risk management and maintenance of public safety at their dams.

- Vahid Taleban, Manager of Flood Operations, is hosting a special virtual flood coordinators meeting on March 4 to discuss potential risks of flooding as a result of snowmelt and spring precipitation, as the northern part of the Grand River watershed has received a significant amount of snow over this winter.

25-27

Moved By Bruce Banbury

Seconded By Kevin Davis

THAT the Chair's Report be received as information.

Carried

12.2 GM-02-25-15 - Conservation Services Update

- L.Heyming provided a presentation on the GRCA's Conservation Services program. The presentation highlighted key programs that promote private land stewardship in the watershed.
- Programs include the Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP), private land tree-planting projects, and promoting stewardship through public engagement and education. Conservation services are Category 2 (municipally requested) programs and services which are provided through agreements with participating municipalities.
- These stewardship programs help to improve and protect water quality, improve soil health and biodiversity, support flood mitigation, and build landscape resilience to climate change. The programs also help meet mutual objectives of shared initiatives such as the Grand River Aquatic Species at Risk Program, and the Priority Watersheds Phosphorus Reduction Program.
- After the presentation, Board members inquired about municipal support for the RWQP, consideration of adding focus on nitrate reduction in certain program areas, and availability of increased funding.
- L.Heyming responded to questions, noting that most municipalities with agreements for these programs have maintained their support over the years, and that any and all funding received would be put to good use.
- K.Davis asked if Board direction was required in terms of placing focus on nitrate reduction, and S.Lawson noted that given the current level of nitrates and rising concern, that it would be a key point of focus as part of the water management plan update staff are currently undertaking.

25-28

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Rob Shirton

THAT Report Number GM-02-25-15 – Conservation Services Update be received as information.

Carried

12.3 GM-02-25-16 - Cash and Investment Status

There were no comments or questions on this item.

25-29

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Jerry Smith

THAT Report Number GM-02-25-16– Cash and Investment Status – January 2025 be received as information.

Carried

12.4 GM-02-25-20 - Financial Summary

There were no comments or questions on this item.

25-30

Moved By Chris White

Seconded By Susan Foxtton

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending January 31, 2025 be approved.

Carried

12.5 GM-02-25-09 - Budget 2025

- The Chair advised that the Budget recommendation is under General Business and asked if there were questions regarding the report and budget package.
- D.Miller asked about the decreased hydro revenue for Conestogo Dam, and S.Radoja confirmed that the dam will be shut down for a period of time for maintenance, and hydro production will resume when the work is complete.

12.6 GM-02-25-10 - Afforestation Services for Spring 2025

There were no comments or questions on this item.

25-31

Moved By Mike Devine

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the 2025 contract for hand planting of seedlings to Brinkman Reforestation Ltd. in the amount of \$102,700.00 (excluding HST) and a total budget of \$118,105.00 (excluding HST) be approved;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the 2025 contract for hand planting of tall stock to Black River Tree Planting Inc. in the amount of \$59,625.00 (excluding HST) and a total budget of \$68,568.75 (excluding HST) be approved.

Carried

12.7 GM-02-25-12 - Refuse Waste Collection and Recycling Request for Proposals - Agreement Extension

There were no comments or questions on this item.

25-32

Moved By Daniel Lawrence

Seconded By Susan Foxtan

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority extends the current agreement with Wasteco for an additional 2-year term to provide refuse/waste collection and recycling bin services for GRCA's Conservation Areas, Administration Centre, and Nature Centres for the estimated total of \$230,015.54 (excluding HST).

Carried

12.8 GM-02-25-11 - Supply and Delivery of Gasoline and Diesel Fuel - Tender Award

There were no comments or questions on this item.

25-33

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Lisa Hern

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the contract for the supply and delivery of gasoline and fuel to Suncor Energy Products Partnership, for a term of five (5) years starting March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2030, for the estimated total of \$747,145.81 (excluding HST) with the option to renew for three (3) additional one (1) year periods.

Carried

12.9 GM-02-25-13 - Septic Pumping and Disposal - Request for Proposal Award

There were no comments or questions on this item.

25-34

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Christine Billings

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) award the contract for the septic tank pumping and disposal to Egger Enviro. Ltd. And Weber Environmental Services, for a term of three (3) years starting April 1, 2025, and ending March 31, 2028, for the estimated total of \$223,213.21(excluding HST).

Carried

12.10 GM-02-25-14 - Supply and Delivery of Campfire Wood - Request for Quotations

D.Miller inquired about the revenue allocation for this purchase. P.Walther-Mabee noted that there is a small profit made on the sale of the wood within the conservation areas, but there is overhead related to delivering the service, and confirmed that any revenue it would be allocated back to conservation areas program.

25-35

Moved By Chris White

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) award the contract for the supply and delivery of campfire wood to McWood Products Inc., for a term of three (3) years starting April 1, 2025 and ending March 30, 2028 for the estimated total of \$676,080.00 (excluding HST).

Carried

12.11 GM-02-25-20 - Current Watershed Conditions

- K.Davis expressed concern for ice jam flooding in the Brantford area and through the watershed, and asked for staff's assessment on the risk of ice jam flooding through March, the communication system, and how staff consider this year in comparison to the ice jam flooding that occurred in Brantford in 2018.
- V.Taleban responded, discussing two components impacting the conditions this year: the depth of the snow, and the amount of water within the snow pack, which is high. The risk for ice jamming is currently moderate and flooding as a result of ice jams can be difficult to predict, however staff are actively monitoring the situation and will continue to do so through the season.
- The GRCA's River Watch program is carefully monitoring the river and seeing a lot of ice movement, and a small jam was identified in Brantford this week (as of February 28).
- In terms of comparators to the 2018 ice jam flooding in Brantford, V.Taleban noted that weather conditions have been different this year, and are not forecast to fluctuate as quickly or as drastically as in 2018. A special flood coordinators meeting is scheduled for March 4, ahead of the anticipated heavy rainfall to ensure watershed CEMCs are as prepared as possible, and the flood notification system will be tested.
- The GRCA will follow its notification process in terms of press releases and issuing of flood notices.

25-36

Moved By Kevin Davis

Seconded By Mike Devine

THAT Report Number GM-02-25-19 – Current Watershed Conditions as of February 18, 2025 be received as information.

Carried

13. Committee of the Whole - Not required.

Not required.

14. General Business

There was no General Business.

14.1 GM-02-25-18 - Report of the Audit Committee

K.Davis shared comments about the Audit Committee meeting, noting that there was good discussion with suggestions made to improve the overall audit process and having appropriate measures in place to mitigate risk.

25-37

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Kevin Davis

THAT the Chair's Report of the Audit Committee be received and approved.

Carried

14.1.1 Audit Committee Terms of Reference

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

25-38

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT the Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee dated November 22, 2024 be approved and implemented with the updated approval date of February 28, 2025.

Carried

14.1.2 Reserve Movements

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

25-39

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT the Gauge Reserve be increased by \$75,000.

Carried

14.1.3 Policy & Governance

K.Davis shared that the Audit Committee had discussed putting controls in place to measure the performance of the organization as a whole, and have brought this recommendation as this practice has been beneficial in other agencies.

25-40

Moved By David Miller

Seconded By Kevin Davis

THAT Grand River Conservation Authority staff be directed to develop and present to the General Membership, within a reasonable timeframe, a Whistleblower Policy with respect to financial controls, and a system of key performance indicators for the organization as a whole.

Carried

14.2 Approval of Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

25-41

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT the Financial Statements of Grand River Conservation Authority as at December 31, 2024 and the Report of the Auditors thereon be received and approved;

AND THAT the Audited Financial Statements be circulated to all Grand River watershed participating municipalities, posted on the Grand River Conservation Authority website, and submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Carried

14.3 Appointment of Auditors

- D.Miller asked how often this service goes to tender, and if that's something that should be considered.
- S.Radoja noted it has been many years, adding that staff do complete periodic surveys to compare value. Also considered is the expertise provided by KPMG with respect to conservation authority practices, budgets, and legislation.
- K.Davis added that this was also discussed at the Committee level, and it may come back for discussion next year. He noted the high level of detail provided by this firm, including an AI method to review every (non-payroll) transaction.

25-42

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Chris White

THAT KPMG Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants, be appointed as Auditors for the Grand River Conservation Authority for the year ending December 31, 2025 at a fee not to exceed \$52,800.

Carried

14.4 Presentation of Budget Estimates for the Current Year

There were no comments or questions regarding the final 2025 Budget, and the Secretary-Treasurer conducted a weighted and recorded vote as is required for the final budget.

25-43

Moved By Chris White

Seconded By Pam Wolf

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority 2025 Budget of \$40,029,965 be approved.

Member	Municipality/Group	Weight	Absent	Present	In Favour	Opposed
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Doug Craig	Region of Waterloo	5.0%	5.0%			
Mike Devine	Region of Waterloo	5.0%		5.0%	5.0%	
Jim Erb	Region of Waterloo	5.0%		5.0%	5.0%	
Susan Foxton	Region of Waterloo	5.0%		5.0%	5.0%	
Gord Greavette	Region of Waterloo	5.0%		5.0%	5.0%	
Colleen James	Region of Waterloo	5.0%	5.0%			
Sandy Shantz	Region of Waterloo	5.0%		5.0%	5.0%	
Natasha Salonen	Region of Waterloo	5.0%	5.0%			
Kari Williams	Region of Waterloo	5.0%	5.0%			
Pam Wolf	Region of Waterloo	5.0%		5.0%	5.0%	
Daniel Lawrence	Haldimand & Norfolk Counties	0.9%		0.9%	0.9%	
Rob Shirton	Haldimand & Norfolk Counties	0.9%		0.9%	0.9%	
John Challinor II	Region of Halton	2.5%	2.5%			
Alex Wilson	City of Hamilton	12.4%		12.4%	12.4%	
Bruce Banbury	County of Oxford	0.8%		0.8%	0.8%	
Gino Caputo	City of Brantford	3.7%	3.7%			
Kevin Davis	City of Brantford	3.7%		3.7%	3.7%	
Christine Billings	City of Guelph	6.8%		6.8%	6.8%	
Ken Yee Chew	City of Guelph	6.8%		6.8%	6.8%	
Guy Gardhouse	Group 1 (E. Garafraxa, Amaranth, Southgate, Melancthon, Grand Valley)	1.1%		1.1%	1.1%	
Lisa Hern	Group 2 (Mapleton, Wellington North)	1.3%		1.3%	1.3%	
Jerry Smith	Group 3 (North Perth, Perth East)	0.4%		0.4%	0.4%	
Shawn Watters	Twp of Ctr Wellington	2.6%		2.6%	2.6%	
Chris White	Group 4 (Erin, Puslinch, Eramosa)	3.0%		3.0%	3.0%	
Brian Coleman	County of Brant	1.5%		1.5%	1.5%	

David Miller	County of Brant	1.5%		1.5%	1.5%	
	Result:	100.0%	26.2%	73.8%	73.8%	0.0%

Carried

14.5 Provision for Borrowing (Pending Receipt of Municipal Apportionment)

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

25-44

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Pam Wolf

WHEREAS it may be necessary for Grand River Conservation Authority (hereinafter called the "Authority") to borrow money, on an interim basis, to meet the Authority's financial obligations while awaiting payment of apportionment by participating municipalities designated as such under The Conservation Authorities Act, RSO 1990 (hereinafter called "Participating Municipalities");

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT the Authority be authorized to borrow, on an interim basis, a sum or sums not exceeding in the aggregate One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) from the Authority's bank at the said bank's minimum lending rate established from time to time, until the Authority has received payment of apportionment from Participating Municipalities;

AND THAT the Chair or Vice-Chair together with the Chief Administrative Officer or Secretary-Treasurer of the Authority be and are hereby authorized to execute for and on behalf of the Authority, a promissory note or notes for the sum to be borrowed pursuant to this Resolution and to affix thereto the corporate seal of the Authority;

AND THAT the amount borrowed pursuant to this Resolution, together with interest thereon, be a charge upon the whole of the money received or to be received by the Authority by way of apportionment collected from Participating Municipalities when such moneys are received;

AND THAT the Chair or Vice-Chair or the Chief Administrative Officer or Secretary-Treasurer of the Authority be and is hereby authorized and directed to apply, in payment of the moneys borrowed pursuant to this Resolution together with interest thereon, all of the moneys received by the Authority by way of apportionment collected from Participating Municipalities.

Carried

14.6 Confirmation of By-law

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

25-45

Moved By Rob Shirton

Seconded By Gord Greavette

THAT Grand River Conservation Authority Administrative By-law 1-2025 be confirmed.

Carried

15. Appointments to Committees

15.1 Appointment of Audit Committee

The Chair called for current Members to express their intent to remain or step down from the Committee, and all Members opted to continue their participation. No concerns from other Members were raised.

25-46

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT the General Membership appoint Chair Challinor, Vice-Chair Watters, Brian Coleman, Kevin Davis, Susan Foxtan, Chris White, and Pam Wolf to the Audit Committee until the next Annual General Meeting.

Carried

15.2 Appointment of Special Recognition Committee - Not required.

15.3 Appointment of Conservation Ontario Council Representatives

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-47

Moved By Gord Greavette

Seconded By Christine Billings

THAT the Chair and the Chief Administrative Officer be appointed as Members of Conservation Ontario Council;

AND THAT the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary Treasurer be appointed as an Alternate Member of Conservation Ontario Council.

Carried

16. 3rd Reading of By-Laws

None.

17. Other Business

None.

18. Closed Meeting

The Chair asked if there were questions regarding the closed item, and seeing that there were none, the Board remained in open session.

18.1 Minutes of the previous closed session

25-48

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT the Minutes of the previous closed session be approved as circulated.

Carried

19. Next Meeting - March 28, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. (Hybrid)

20. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Moved By Jerry Smith

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer
Grand River Conservation Authority
400 Clyde Road, PO Box 729
Cambridge ON, N1R 5W6

March 6, 2025

Dear Ms. Lawson,

RE: Support of the Perth County Stewardship Program

We are writing on behalf of the Perth County Stewardship Program to express our gratitude for your unwavering support and collaboration in our shared mission to enhance and protect the natural environment of Perth County.

The success of our program in its initial two application intakes is a testament to the direct and indirect support provided by the Conservation Authority. Your commitment to offering technical expertise and partnership has been instrumental in empowering local landowners to invest in vital stewardship projects such as windbreaks, shelterbelts, and living snow fences. These initiatives are pivotal in enhancing the resilience of our natural assets and agricultural lands, and in contributing to the mitigation and adaptation efforts needed to combat the challenges posed by a changing climate.

Without your support, knowledge, and the collaborative spirit of your organization, our achievements would not have been possible. Together, we have achieved the following:

- Supported the planting of 18,766 trees and shrubs in Perth County;
- Establishing 27.6 kilometers of new windbreaks;
- Reforesting 26.8 acres of marginal lands or sub-quality forests;
- Adding 52,769 kilograms of annual carbon sequestration power to our landscape.

Attached is a one-page infographic highlighting the success of the program since its official launch in November 2023. As we continue to adaptively manage the Stewardship Program, we are excited about the prospect of expanding our grant streams. We are confident that, together, we will continue to 'walk hand in hand down the same trail', striving toward our common goals and ensuring a sustainable future for Perth County.

Once again, thank you for your invaluable support. We look forward to our continued partnership and to achieving even greater successes together. Please circulate copies of this letter as correspondence to your General Manager and Board of Directors. Thank you.

Warm regards,



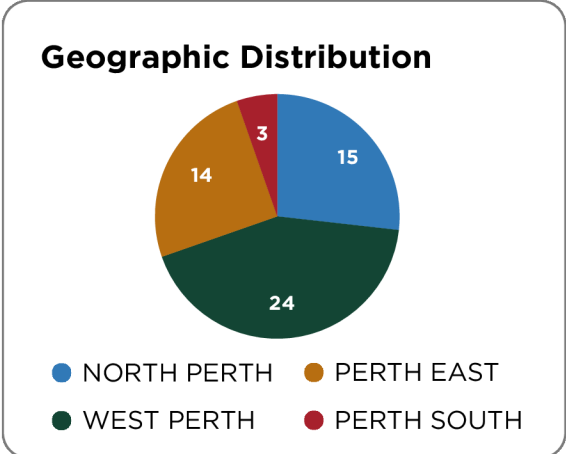
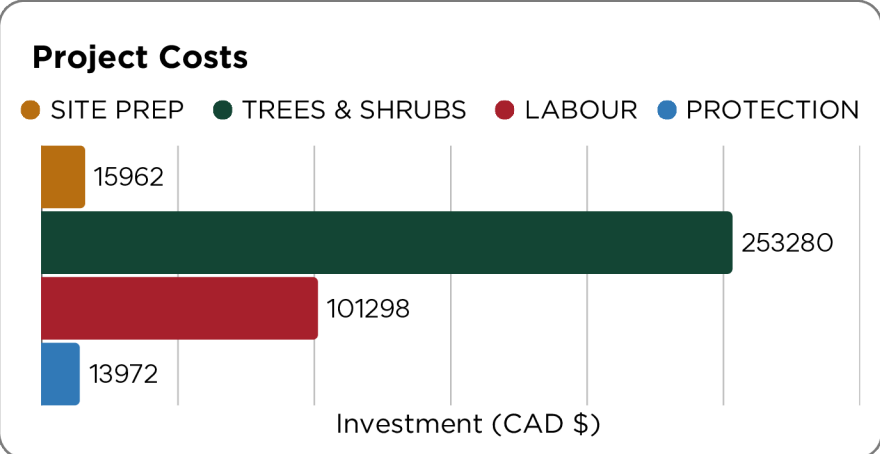
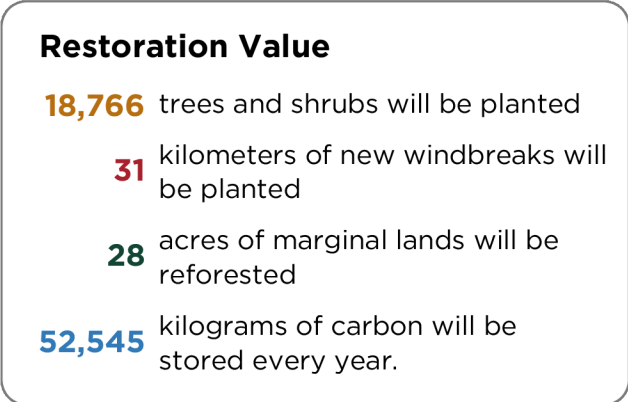
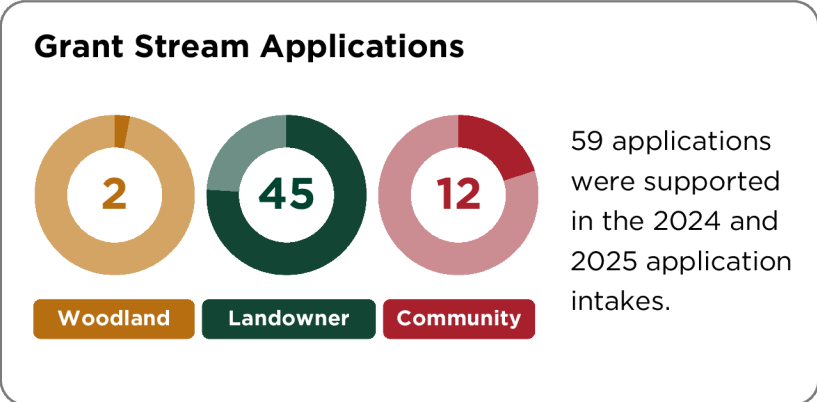
Hannah Cann
Resilience & Stewardship Coordinator
Perth County Stewardship Program
4 Napier Street
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hcann@perthcounty.ca



W. Dean Trentowsky
Deputy Warden of Perth County
Chair of the Perth County Agricultural Working Group
Perth County Stewardship Program
1 Huron Street
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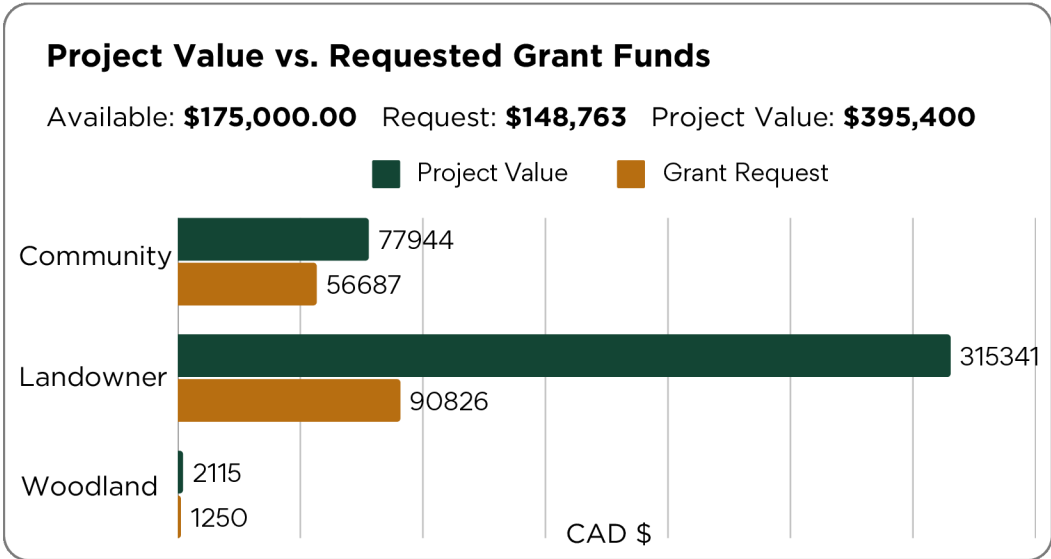
STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM RESULTS

The Stewardship Program supports stewardship projects and forest management plans across Perth County. The program invests in natural assets supports resiliency and climate mitigation efforts, as well as safeguarding the agricultural resources across the County.



Species Diversity

51 plant species will be planted, creating cohesive ecosystems in restoration plots, and strategically diverse windbreaks. 99% of the trees and shrubs planted will be large stock, and 1% will be seedling stock.



Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-36

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Chair's Report

Recommendation:

THAT the Chair's Report for March 2025 be received as information.

Report:

The purpose of my writing is to share with you my activities over the last 30 days.

Special Note:

- The Chair wishes to thank Vice-Chair Shawn Watters for stepping up on rather short notice to chair the GRCA AGM on February 28th. The Chair also wishes to thank the GRCA Board and the GRCA Management Committee for their understanding and best wishes related to his hip injury and related surgery. He is now on the mend and has retired from the sport of hockey.
- Following the recent Provincial election and subsequent cabinet shuffle, changes have been made to certain ministries' areas of authority and responsibilities; the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks now has responsibility over conservation authorities.
- Letters of congratulations have been sent to two watershed MPPs regarding appointments to Cabinet; Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris Jr. as Minister of Natural Resources, and Milton MPP Zee Hamid, as Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform, as part of the Ministry of the Solicitor General. Also, as GRCA will now be governed under the new Ministry, a letter has been sent to Durham MPP Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. The Chair has requested a meeting with Minister McCarthy at his earliest convenience to discuss various conservation authority matters.
- With regret, the Chair is sharing the news that Marilyn Murray, a long-time member of the Foundation has passed away at the age of 92. Marilyn was a devoted volunteer on our Board from 1986 to 2006, and after that she remained an active volunteer in her community. Marilyn continued her efforts for the GRCF in her dedication and support of the new Guelph Lake Nature Centre project since fundraising for the project began in 20210 with the Your River, Your Life campaign. On behalf of the Foundation and the Authority, condolences have been sent to the Marilyn's family.
- The March meeting of the GRCA Board of Directors represents GRCA Manager of Corporate Services Sonja Radoja's last day on the job, as she is retiring after 25 years of service to the organization. Sonja has been an exemplary leader, particularly when it comes to overseeing GRCA's increasingly complex financial matters. On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanks her for her many years of committed service.

Administration:

- Whenever there is a matter of concern by a GRCA Board member about a GRCA program or service, to ensure it is dealt with quickly, rather than call staff, Board members are encouraged to contact CAO Samantha Lawson at slawson@grandriver.ca or (519) 621-2763 or Chair John Challinor II at john.challinor@milton.ca or (416) 918-4472 immediately;
- Congratulatory letters were sent to all Grand River watershed Members of Provincial Parliament following the February 27th provincial election and an open invitation to meet to discuss our programs and services was included;

- The GRCA Strategic Plan will be circulated to the Board of Directors in April for its review and approval;
- The draft CAO Performance Review Plan will be circulated to the Board of Directors in June for its review and approval;
- The draft Chair, Vice-Chair and Board Effectiveness Review Plan will be circulated to the Board of Directors in August for its review and approval; and
- The Chair will be working with the Vice-Chair, the CAO and the Deputy CAO to review GRCA Board governance matters over the next several months, with a view to updating the document and addressing matters raised by the Board by the fall of 2026. All matters will be brought to the Board for its review and approval.

Files:

- As promised in the last Chair's Report, a confidential, twice-annual update outlining the status of any liabilities has been distributed to the GRCA Board at its March meeting;
- As promised in the last Chair's Report, a schedule for Board education/department projects/presentations for the remainder of the year will be distributed to the GRCA Board at its March meeting. These presentations will help increase Board knowledge about key GRCA activities and strengthen relations between it and the Management Committee;
- As promised in the last Chair's Report, an updated report on the composition of the GRCA Board with respect to agricultural representation will be distributed to the GRCA Board at its March meeting;
- As promised in the last Chair's Report, an invitation has been circulated to the GRCA Board to attend a Board/Management Committee luncheon following the June meeting of the Board;
- As promised in the last Chair's Report, a delegation template and related process will go live on the GRCA website in April following the review and approval by the GRCA Board at its March meeting;
- GRCA staff will distribute a backgrounder report on nitrates to the GRCA Board at its March meeting; and
- GRCA staff will distribute a report about consideration of a Whistle Blower's Policy at the April meeting of the Board. This recommendation came out of the February 19th GRCA Audit Committee meeting.

Meetings:

- The Chair had a telephone call with Brantford Mayor Kevin Davis and Brantford Councillor Gino Caputo, both GRCA Board members, on March 4th to discuss updates related to the nature centres, water quality and other related matters. The Chair encourages such dialogue with all members of the GRCA Board at any time about any matter they wish to discuss with the Chair;
- Special Flood Coordinators Meeting held on March 4th. Thanks to Vice-Chair Watters for delivering the opening remarks. Vahid Taleban has a full report and presentation later in the March meeting agenda;
- The Chair had a telephone call with the GRCA CAO on March 12th to review the organization's monthly status update;
- The Chair attended virtually the Lake Erie Source Protection Region Management Committee Meeting on March 17th;
- The Chair attended the GRCA Board of Directors meeting on March 19th; and
- The Chair attended the GRCA Board Agenda Review meeting on March 27th.
- Conservation Ontario Council will be hosting its Annual General Meeting on April 14th in Toronto. The Chair plans to attend the AGM on behalf of the Board. An agenda has not yet been posted.

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-32

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Additional Member Appointment, Agricultural Sector Representative

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-32– Additional Member Appointment, Agricultural Sector Representative be received as information.

Summary:

Earlier this year there was a public posting for an additional member to be appointed to the Grand River Conservation Authority Board as an Agricultural Sector Representative. This posting was also circulated in 2022 and the GRCA Board directed staff to send a letter to the Minister to emphasize the GRCA's support for having agricultural representation on the Board, to provide some information about the work that the GRCA does with and for the agricultural and rural community in the watershed, and to request that an additional member not be appointed at that time as the GRCA Board had several municipally-appointed members who also represented the agricultural sector. With direction from the Board, staff could prepare another letter to be sent to the Minister in response to the new posting.

Report:

In December 2020, the Conservation Authorities Act was updated to include a new provision allowing the Minister to appoint an additional member to the Authority as a representative of the agricultural sector. Under the Act, the agricultural sector representative member is not permitted to vote on: resolutions to enlarge an authority's area of jurisdiction, resolutions to amalgamate an authority with another authority, resolutions to dissolve the authority, or resolutions relating to any budgetary matter. The member's appointment is for a term of up to four years as determined by the Minister and is subject to replacement as determined by the Minister. This member is not counted when determining quorum as that is limited to members appointed by the participating municipalities. The GRCA's By-law reflects the differences for this member as it relates to remuneration, voting limitations, quorum, etc. Regardless of how a member is appointed to the GRCA Board, all members have a fiduciary duty of loyalty and duty of care to the GRCA when performing their board responsibilities.

There was a public posting in early 2022 for an agricultural representative to be appointed at each of the 36 Conservation Authorities, although only four (4) appointments were made at that time. When the posting was circulated, GRCA staff were directed to send a letter to the Minister (Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks at that time) to emphasize the GRCA's support for having agricultural representation on the Board, to provide some information about the work that the GRCA does with and for the agricultural and rural community in the watershed, and to request that an additional member not be appointed at that time as the GRCA Board had several municipally-appointed members who also represented the agricultural sector. This letter to the Minister is included as *Attachment A* for reference. No agricultural sector representative member was appointed to the GRCA Board in response to the 2022 posting.

The Minister has recently posted a new opportunity for an additional member representing the agricultural sector for ten (10) different Conservation Authorities, including the GRCA. The posting is included as *Attachment B* for reference.

In early February 2025, a request was circulated to Board Members on behalf of the Chair inquiring about their agriculture industry experience. Thirteen (13) Board Members responded; six (6) members indicated that they did not have agricultural experience, and seven (7) members indicated that they do have agricultural experience. Of the 26-person Board, 7 members represents over 25% of total board membership with agricultural experience.

At the February 2025 General Membership meeting, correspondence about this matter was received by the Board and is attached for reference as *Attachment C*.

With direction from the Board, staff could prepare a letter to the Minister similar to the one sent in 2022.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable

Prepared by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO, Secretary-Treasurer

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer



Administration Centre: 400 Clyde Road, P.O. Box 729 Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6

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February 18, 2022

The Honourable David Piccini, MPP
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
College Park 5th Flr
777 Bay St
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

**Re: Additional Member Appointment, agricultural sector representative
s.14 (4) of the Conservation Authorities Act**

Dear Minister,

The Grand River Conservation Authority General Membership has created an ad hoc committee of the Board to advise and direct the corporation on the recent and upcoming Regulations, and to make recommendations to the Board about the Transition Plan and the Programs and Services Inventory.

This Committee recently met and discussed the new agricultural sector representative appointment posting that may result in an additional member being appointed to the GRCA Board. The Committee is very supportive of having agricultural representation on the GRCA Board.

The Grand River watershed is one of the richest agricultural regions in Canada. Approximately 70 per cent of the watershed is farmland, and working with the agricultural community and rural landowners is integral to the work we do at the GRCA. Through long-term GRCA programs and services (e.g.: Rural Water Quality Program, land stewardship services, etc.) we have been working directly with rural landowners and farmers for many years, and have built strong relationships with the agricultural and rural community in the watershed.

There are currently several members on the GRCA Board appointed by the participating municipalities who are active farmers, and thus represent the agricultural sector. The committee has asked staff to follow up with you about the appointment posting to request consideration that an additional member may not need to be appointed to the GRCA Board at this time, since the current membership includes representation of the agricultural sector.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha Lawson".

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Advertisement

Position/Title	Member (Part-Time)
Agency	Grand River Conservation Authority
Advertisement Date	07-Feb-2022
Closing Date	21-Feb-2022
File Number	PAS-220040
Position Type	Part-Time
Remuneration	PER DIEM
Roles and Responsibilities	The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is seeking an agricultural sector representative to be appointed as a member of the Grand River Conservation Authority.

Under subsection 14(4) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA), the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks can appoint an agricultural sector representative to each conservation authority (CA), which is generally made up of municipally appointed members.

As enabled under the CAA, a member appointed by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector would have a role comparable to other municipally appointed CA members (with some limits to voting powers).

These representatives will be appointed to perform their specific roles and responsibilities as a member of the CA while remaining accountable to the Minister for their actions.

The Minister appointed agricultural sector representative of the CA will be expected to provide input on all CA matters, including discussions and applicable decisions related, but not limited, to:

- matters of CA strategic direction;
- the establishment and implementation of regulations, policies and programs;
- management of CA-owned lands, including proposals to acquire or dispose of land, subject to the requirements under the CAA;
- the creation of Committees and/or Advisory Boards, the members thereof and the terms of reference for these Committees and/or Advisory Boards;
- consultation requirements and processes for the delivery of CA programs and services;
- opportunities to raise money for non-mandatory programs and services;
- proposal for new and implementation of existing capital projects;
- matters related to administration of the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNR) section 28 natural hazard permit;
- holding hearings required for the purpose of reviewing section 28 permit applications in accordance with the *Statutory Powers and Procedures Act*;
- planning matters under the *Planning Act* as delegated by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) as part of the provincial one window review process and by NDMNR for consistency with natural hazard policies of the Provincial Policy Statement; and
- other operational matters.

Under the CAA, the agricultural sector representative is prohibited from voting on CA decisions related to:

- enlarging a CA's area of jurisdiction;
- amalgamating a CA with another CA;
- dissolving the CA; or
- any budgetary matter.

Note: The agricultural sector representative could still provide input to CA discussions on these matters.

A Minister-appointed agricultural sector representative will be required to follow the provincial ethical framework set out for government public appointees in the Management Board of Cabinet's Agencies and Appointments Directive (AAD) <https://www.ontario.ca/page/agencies-and-appointments-directive> and undertake any required training as directed by the Public Appointment Secretariat.

The representative would also be bound by the provisions of a CA's by-laws that govern the other members of the CA, including the code of conduct and conflict of interest policies.

Qualifications

A Minister appointed agricultural sector representative of the CA must:

- be a resident in a participating municipality in which the CA has jurisdiction (subsection 14(3) of the CAA), and
- have demonstrated knowledge of and experience in/with the local agricultural sector.

Term

4 years

Agricultural sector representative members are appointed by Minister's letter for a term of up to four (4) years, as may be determined by the Minister, in accordance with the CAA, and their terms are subject to renewal. The Minister's appointment/s of agricultural sector representatives to CA membership is made at the pleasure of the Minister and may be revoked at any time.

Time Commitment

Meet as required

Agricultural sector representative members are appointed on a part-time basis. They would attend CA membership meetings as scheduled and required by the CA to which the member is appointed.

Expenses

Yes

The Minister appointed agricultural sector representative for this CA is entitled to receive a \$150 per diem plus reimbursement for travel expenses for reasonable work-related expenses in accordance with the Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive and any other Treasury Board and Management Board of Cabinet directives of the Provincial Government.

Apply

Public Appointments Secretariat

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Waterloo Federation of Agriculture WFA.
February 19, 2025.

GRCA Chair, John Challinor.
GRCA Vice-Chair, Shawn Watters.
GRCA Board of Directors.

Re: Public appointments secretariat, appointment to GRCA Board.

The Waterloo Federation of Agriculture has endeavoured to represent the interests of the farmers of Waterloo Region for over 90 years. For most of these years we have had an exemplary relationship with the GRCA.

Our partnership with GRCA in the Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP) has resulted in more than \$20 million in total capital projects and is the template for collaborative water quality improvement programs in North America.

The RWQP demonstrates an incredibly successful partnership between farmers and urban communities working with the GRCA and the Region of Waterloo. These voluntary, private land stewardship projects provide water quality benefits to individual properties, the Region of Waterloo, downstream communities and the general health of Lake Erie. Farmers keep nutrients and soil on their land so that they don't become pollutants for water users downstream.

The RWQP is just one example of how farmers have worked together with the GRCA to pool resources and be better stewards of our precious water resources.

Your commitment to working with us through outreach, sharing of financial resources and extension continues to be appreciated. Many Conservation Authorities in Ontario have less than stellar relationships with their agricultural communities. Fortunately that has not been the case in Waterloo Region and we thank you for being such good partners.

Recently, the Province of Ontario gave selected Conservation Authorities the opportunity to add an agricultural sector representative to their Boards. The WFA firmly supports this measure, and thanks the government of Ontario for taking this important step to ensure that agricultural needs are represented in our watersheds. It is important that, even though some representatives on local Conservation Boards "may" have some level of agricultural experience, there be a dedicated point person tasked to look at issues through an agricultural lens. It is entirely different from municipal responsibility, which must balance the needs of all ratepayers in an area.

Additionally, there is never any guarantee that a municipal representative will be re-elected. Farmers make up less than 2% of the population, yet the land that we utilize covers the vast majority of the watershed.

We have learned that an individual from Dufferin County has applied for a position on the GRCA Board.. This beef and sheep pasture farmer is widely recognized, not only in Dufferin county, but in the province for his innovative farming practices, and his respect for the soil, water, flora and fauna that he stewards on his farm. We can attest that he is a well-spoken

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professional and will be an exceptional, common-sense representative for the farm community as a whole.

The Waterloo Federation of Agriculture believes that the addition of an agricultural representative would demonstrate GRCA's commitment to continuing its history of working collaboratively and respectfully with the farming community and would be a welcome addition to the GRCA's Board of Directors.

On behalf of the WFA and the rural agricultural community, thank you for considering this valuable step that acknowledges agriculture's role in water and soil conservation. Thank you for all of the work that you do and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Regards,

Nic Weber

Nic Weber
President Waterloo Federation of Agriculture.

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-37

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Schedule of Board Education Presentations

Recommendation:

THAT the Report Number GM-03-25-37 – Schedule of Board Education Presentations be received as information.

Report:

Establishing a monthly presentation schedule allows departments to share their programs, services and annual reports with the Board in a structured and consistent manner. This activity is beneficial because it enhances transparency, ensures the board is well-informed about departmental operations, and ultimately supports more informed decision making across the organization.

A monthly presentation schedule is identified below. However, in months where the agenda is particularly heavy or complex, certain presentations may be deferred to allow sufficient time to address other pressing priorities.

Proposed Board Educational Presentation Schedule:

April: Source Water Protection

Source protection planning is undertaken on a watershed basis. For planning purposes, Source Protection Regions were created with up to five watersheds in each. The Lake Erie Source Protection Region includes the Grand River, Long Point Region, Catfish Creek and Kettle Creek watersheds. The Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee leads the process. It is a multi-stakeholder group representing municipalities, businesses, farmers, residents, First Nations and others. The province appoints the chair, while the other 24 voting members are selected according to procedures in regulation. Conservation authorities are facilitators of the process. They provide staff and administrative support, as well as contributing the results of their own knowledge and research to the process. Under the Clean Water Act, the members of the GRCA board also serve as the members of the Grand River Source Protection Authority.

May: Dam and Dike Safety Program

The purposes of a dam and dike safety program are to protect life, property, and the environment by ensuring that all dams are designed, constructed, operated, and maintained as safely and as effectively as is reasonably possible. Accomplishing these purposes requires commitments to continually inspect, evaluate, and document the design, construction, operation, maintenance, rehabilitation, and emergency preparedness of each dam and the associated public.

June: Natural Heritage Program Annual Report

The Natural Heritage Program includes those activities associated with providing service and/ or assistance to private and public landowners and community groups on sound environmental practices that will enhance, restore or protect the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. The program includes watershed scale assessments, as well as the implementation and assessment of restoration activities on GRCA land. This presentation will focus on the annual activities of the program.

August: Strategic Communications and Environmental Education

Corporate Communications is a strategic management function that supports the organization's goals and objectives by building trust and strengthening relationships both inside and outside the organization. The presentation will include an overview of the major projects within this section for 2025-2026.

Additionally, this department also includes the Environmental Education program that connects children and adults with nature through its outdoor environmental education. These programs offer people of all ages the opportunity to engage with the local environment of the Grand River watershed, fostering an appreciation for the environment and the watershed.

September: Overview of the Digital Information and Innovation Department

In today's modern world, information technology involving the development, maintenance and use of computer systems, software and other communications infrastructure plays a vital role in the success of any organization. At the GRCA, the Digital Information and Innovation department leads and oversees all the GRCA's information management activities, providing the technical framework and support network that enables the GRCA to accomplish its strategic vision.

October: Overview of the Flood Operations Department

This department coordinates GRCA's technical programs related to Natural Hazards Management and is responsible for the Flood Forecasting and Warning program. The GRCA maintains an extensive flood forecasting and warning system that monitors river and weather conditions 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This includes gauges and monitoring stations located throughout the watershed and maintains a flood forecasting computer model that can be used to forecast the timing and location of floodwaters when a flood is imminent or occurring. This department also leads projects for developing, implementing and maintaining GRCA's natural hazard mapping and provides technical input into the planning and regulatory program.

November: Overview of the Central Services Department

The Central Services department provides technical and operational support to various GRCA program areas. Central Services has four groups: Construction & Maintenance, Motor Pool, Forestry Operations and Arboriculture. Physical resources and staff are shared between the various groups as necessary to meet seasonal priorities. This presentation will provide an overview of the programs activities and projects completed over the past year.

December: Conservation Areas Operations Annual Update

The GRCA manages the oldest and one of the largest networks of conservation areas in the province. The 11 fee-for-use conservation areas and the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area are collectively called Grand River Conservation Areas. These conservation areas provide various recreational opportunities such as camping, hiking, swimming, fishing and picnicking. The GRCA's conservation areas are vital parts of the recreational infrastructure in their communities, providing locations for a wide range of events and activities.

This presentation will provide an overview of the program's activities, achievements, challenges and financial performance over the past year.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Submitted by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-31

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: By-law Update – Delegations

Recommendation:

THAT By-law 2-2025 be read a first and second time;

AND THAT staff be directed to make amendments based on discussion at the meeting.

Summary:

The By-law has been updated to add more clarity around delegations at Board meetings.

Report:

By-law 2-2025 has been updated to clarify timelines and requirements for delegations at Board meetings. The draft By-law is attached as Appendix A for reference. Changes include additional consideration for the scheduling of delegations, requirements for circulation of presentation material in advance to facilitate circulation to the Board prior to the meeting, enhanced language about respectful behaviour, and the introduction of a Delegation Request Form, which is attached as Appendix B for reference.

One additional edit was made to change the reference to the Retention of Records Policy to the Records Retention Policy.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable

Prepared by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO, Secretary-Treasurer

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer



Grand River Conservation Authority

By-Law No. 21-2025

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
By-Law No. 24-2025

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Introduction

The Grand River Conservation Authority is a non-share corporation, established under Section 3 of the Conservation Authorities Act, with the objects to provide, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, programs and services designed for the purpose of furthering the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in watershed(s) other than gas, coal, and minerals.

Under the Act, municipalities within a common watershed are enabled to petition the province to establish a conservation authority. Members of the Authority are appointed as representatives by the Participating Municipalities and are effectively also Directors of the Authority.

The Members of the Conservation Authority form the General Membership of the Conservation Authority. The Members are bound by the Act and other applicable legislation. The Authority must always act within the scope of its powers. As a non-share corporation, the Authority has the capacity and, subject to the Act and other applicable legislation, the rights, powers, and privileges of a natural person. The powers of a conservation authority to accomplish its objects are set out in the Act, including those identified under subsection 21(1).

Powers of authorities

21 (1) For the purposes of accomplishing its objects, an authority has power,

- (a) to research, study and investigate the watershed and to support the development and implementation of programs and services intended to further the purposes of this Act;
- (b) for any purpose necessary to any project under consideration or undertaken by the authority, to enter into and upon any land, with consent of the occupant or owner, and survey and take levels of it and make such borings or sink such trial pits as the authority considers necessary;
- (c) to acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise any land that it may require, and, subject to subsection (2) and (4), to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of land so acquired;
- (d) despite subsection (2), to lease for a term of five years or less land acquired by the authority;
- (e) to purchase or acquire any personal property that it may require and sell or otherwise deal therewith;
- (f) to enter into agreements for the purchase of materials, employment of labour and other purposes as may be necessary for the due carrying out of any project or to further the authority's objects;
- (g) to enter into agreements with owners of private lands to facilitate the due carrying out of any project;
- (h) to determine the proportion of the total benefit afforded to all the participating municipalities that is afforded to each of them;
- (i) to erect works and structures and create reservoirs by the construction of dams or otherwise;
- (j) to control the flow of surface waters in order to prevent floods or pollution or to reduce the adverse effects thereof;

(k) to alter the course of any river, canal, brook, stream or watercourse, and divert or alter, as well temporarily as permanently, the course of any river, stream, road, street or way, or raise or sink its level in order to carry it over or under, on the level of or by the side of any work built or to be built by the authority, and to divert or alter the position of any water-pipe, gas-pipe, sewer, drain or any telegraph, telephone or electric wire or pole;

(l) to use lands that are owned or controlled by the authority for purposes, not inconsistent with its objects, as it considers proper;

(m) to use lands owned or controlled by the authority for park or other recreational purposes, and to erect, or permit to be erected, buildings, booths and facilities for such purposes and to make charges for admission thereto and the use thereof;

(n) to collaborate and enter into agreements with ministries and agencies of government, municipal councils and local boards and other organizations and individuals;

(o) to plant and produce trees on Crown lands with the consent of the Minister, and on other lands with the consent of the owner, for any purpose;

(q) generally to do all such acts as are necessary for the due carrying out of any project or as may be desirable to further the objects of the authority.

A. Definitions

“**Apportionment**” means the amount of net costs apportioned to participating municipalities in accordance with the Act and Regulations under the Act.

“**Authority**” means the Grand River Conservation Authority.

“**Act**” means the *Conservation Authorities Act*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter C.27

“**Chair**” means the Chairperson as referenced in the Act as elected by the Members of the Authority.

“**Chief Administrative Officer**” means the General Manager or Chief Administrative Officer of the Authority, and which may, by resolution of the Authority, include the responsibilities of the Secretary-Treasurer if so designated by resolution of the Authority.

“**Fiscal Year**” means the period from January 1 through December 31.

“**General Membership**” means all of the Members, collectively, and effectively acting as Directors as specified in the *Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA)*.

“**Majority**” means half of the votes plus one.

“**Members**” shall mean the members appointed to the Authority by the participating municipalities in the Authority’s area of jurisdiction, and the member appointed by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector. Members effectively act as Directors as specified in the *Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA)*.

“**Minister**” means the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act.

“**Officer**” means an officer of the Authority as empowered to sign contracts, agreements, and other documents on behalf of the Authority in accordance with section 19.1 of the Act, which shall include the Chair, Vice-Chair(s), the Chief Administrative Officer, and the Secretary-Treasurer (or the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, if applicable).

“**Participating Municipality**” means a municipality that is designated by or under the Act as a participating municipality in a conservation authority.

“**Pecuniary Interest**” includes the financial or material interests of a Member and the financial or material interests of a member of the Member’s immediate family.

“**Secretary-Treasurer**” means Secretary-Treasurer of the Authority with the roles specified in the Act.

“**Staff**” means employees of the Authority as provided for under Section 18(1) of the Act.

“**Vice-Chair**” means the Vice-Chairperson as elected by the Members of the Authority.

“**Weighted Majority Vote**” means the votes of 51 percent of the total weighted value for of the votes cast. Each member’s vote is weighted by the percentage that applies under Ontario Regulation 402/22: Budget and Apportionment.

B. Governance

1. Members

a) *Appointments*

Participating Municipalities within the jurisdiction of the Grand River Conservation Authority may appoint Members in accordance with the Order-in-Council dated October 7, 1994. An additional member may be appointed to the Authority by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector.

Appointed Members must reside in a Participating Municipality within the Authority's area of jurisdiction and may include citizens as well as elected members of municipal councils. When appointing members, the council of a participating municipality must ensure that at least 70 percent of its appointees are selected from among the members of the municipal council, or they may apply to the Minister for permission to select less than the prescribed percentage.

Collectively, the appointed Members, for the purposes of this by-law, are also referred to as the General Membership.

b) *Term of Member Appointments*

In accordance with Section 14 of the Act, a Member shall be appointed for a term of up to four years at the discretion of the appointing municipal council; such term beginning at the first meeting of the Authority following his or her appointment and ending immediately before the first meeting of the Authority following the appointment of his or her replacement. The Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the appropriate municipality in advance of the expiration date of any Member's term, unless notified by the municipality of the Member's reappointment or the appointment of his or her replacement. A Member is eligible for reappointment. A Member can be replaced by a Participating Municipality at the municipality's discretion prior to the end of their term.

The Minister will define the term for the Member they appoint as a representative of the agricultural sector and they may be replaced at the Minister's discretion.

c) *Powers of the General Membership*

Subject to the Act and other applicable legislation, the General Membership is empowered without restriction to exercise all of the powers prescribed to the Authority under the Act. In addition to the powers of an authority under s.21 of the Act for the purposes of accomplishing its objects, the powers of the General Membership include but are not limited to:

- i. Approving by resolution, the creation of Committees and/or Advisory Boards, the members thereof, and the terms of reference for these Committees and/or Advisory Boards;
- ii. Appointing a Chief Administrative Officer and/or Secretary-Treasurer;
- iii. Terminating the services of the Chief Administrative Officer and/or Secretary-Treasurer.
- iv. Approving establishing and implementing regulations, policies, and programs;
- v. Awarding contracts or agreements where the approval of the Authority is required under the Authority's purchasing policy.
- vi. Appointing an Executive Committee and delegate to the Committee any of its powers except:

- i. The termination of the services of the Chief Administrative Officer and/or Secretary-Treasurer,
- ii. The power to raise money, and
- iii. The power to enter into contracts or agreements other than those contracts or agreements as are necessarily incidental to the works approved by the Authority.
- vii. Approving by resolution, any new capital project of the Authority;
- viii. Approving by resolution, the method of financing any new capital projects;
- ix. Approving details on budget allocations on any new or existing capital projects;
- x. Approving the total budget for the ensuing year, and approving the apportionment to be paid by the Participating Municipalities;
- xi. Receiving and approving the Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor for the preceding year;
- xii. Authorizing the borrowing of funds on the promissory note of the Authority in accordance with subsection 3(5) of the Act;
- xiii. Approving by resolution, any proposed expropriation of land or disposition of land, subject to the requirements under the Act;
- xiv. Approving permits or refusing permission as may be required under any regulations made under Section 28 of the Act except where approving permits has been delegated to the Chief Administrative Officer;
- xv. Holding hearings required for the purpose of reviewing permit applications or as may be required under the Act or Regulation 41/24, and advising every applicant of their right to appeal the applicable decision directly to the Minister or through the Ontario Land Tribunal.

If a Member has been appointed representing the agricultural sector, they do not have a vote on items ix, x, and xi as per s.14 of the Act and s.2 of *O.Reg.402/22 Budget and Apportionment*.

d) Member Accountability

Participating Municipalities appoint Members to the Authority as their representatives. Members have the responsibilities of Directors of the corporation that is the Authority. While the Chief Administrative Officer and/or the Secretary-Treasurer and other staff of the Authority are responsible for the day-to-day operations, the General Membership is responsible for matters of governance, ensuring compliance with applicable legislation, ensuring appropriate policies are in place, and for the financial soundness of the Authority.

Every member and officer, in exercising their powers or discharging their duties to the Authority, shall act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the Authority and exercise the care, diligence, and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.

All Members have the responsibility to be guided by and adhere to the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and Conflict of Interest Policy (Appendix 2), as adopted by the Authority.

Additionally, the agricultural representative appointed by the Minister will be required to follow the provincial ethical framework set out for government public appointees in the Management Board of Cabinet's Agencies and Appointments Directive.

Members are responsible for:

- i. Attending all meetings of the Authority;
- ii. Understanding the purpose, function, and responsibilities of the authority;
- iii. Being familiar with the Authority's statutory and other legal obligations;
- iv. With the administration, setting strategic direction for the Authority.

e) *Applicable Legislation*

In addition to the Act, the Members are subject to other legislation including, but not limited to:

- *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010*

If any part of the by-law conflicts with any provision of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, or the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, or a provision of a regulation made under one of those acts, the provision of that act or regulation prevails. The same applies to conflicts between these by-laws and the *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act* except where dictated by the *Conservation Authorities Act*, in which case the *Conservation Authorities Act* prevails.

f) *Relationship Between Members and Staff*

The General Membership relies on the Chief Administrative Officer to manage the operations of the organization, including all employees of the Authority. The Chief Administrative Officer is accountable to the Authority, working cooperatively to achieve the goals established by the Members.

The General Membership will ensure that a process exists for regular performance evaluations of the Chief Administrative Officer.

2. Officers

The Officers of the Authority, and their respective responsibilities, shall be:

Chair

- Is a Member of the Authority;
- Presides and preserves order and decorum and decides on questions of order at all meetings of the General Membership (and Executive Committee if applicable);
- Calls special meetings if necessary;
- Attends all meetings of the Authority;
- Acts as a public spokesperson on behalf of the General Membership;
- Serves as signing officer for the Authority;
- Ensures relevant information and policies are brought to the Authority's attention;
- Keeps the General Membership apprised of significant issues in a timely fashion;
- Is a member of the Conservation Ontario Council and the Grand River Conservation Foundation;
- Performs other duties when directed to do so by resolution of the Authority.

Vice-Chair

- Is a Member of the Authority;
- Attends all meetings of the Authority (and Executive Committee if applicable);
- Carries out assignments as requested by the Chair;

- Understands the responsibilities of the Chair and acts as Chair immediately upon the death, incapacity to act, absence, or resignation of the Chair until such time as a new Chair is appointed or until the Chair resumes his/her duties;
- Serves as a signing officer for the Authority.

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Responsibilities of the CAO as assigned by the Authority include, but are not limited to the following:

- Is an employee of the Authority;
- Attends all meetings of the General Membership (and Executive Committee if applicable) or designates an acting CAO if not available;
- Works in close collaboration with the Chair and Vice-Chair and keeps them apprised of relevant information and significant issues in a timely fashion;
- Develops a strategic plan for approval by the General Membership and implements short and long-range goals and objectives;
- Is responsible for the management of the operations of the Authority, including all staff and programs of the Authority;
- Ensures resolutions of the Authority are implemented in a timely fashion;
- Develops and maintains effective relationships and ensures good communications with Participating Municipalities, federal and provincial government ministries/agencies, Indigenous communities, other conservation authorities, Conservation Ontario, stakeholders, community groups, and associations;
- Approves applications under the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulations made under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act, RSO 1990 when such applications meet the Authority's policies, are recommended by staff for approval with or without conditions and have a maximum period of validity that does not exceed 60 months;
- Approves permit extensions and Notices of Intent to refuse permit extensions or cancel permits made under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act, RSO 1990 or the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulation.
- Completes administrative reviews under the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulation and reviews fee reconsideration requests.
- Is a member of Conservation Ontario Council;
- Serves as a signing officer for the Authority.

Secretary-Treasurer

- Is an employee of the Authority;
- Fulfills the requirements of the Secretary-Treasurer as defined in the Act;
- Attends all meetings of the General Membership (and Executive Committee, if applicable);
- Is the custodian of the Corporate Seal;
- Ensures notices are given and minutes are provided as required by this By-Law;
- Ensures accurate records of meetings and accounts of the Authority are kept;
- Carries out or causes to be carried out required financial transactions on behalf of the Authority;
- Is an alternate member of Conservation Ontario Council;
- Serves as a signing officer for the Authority.

3. Absence of Chair and Vice-Chair

In the event of the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair from any meeting, the members shall appoint an Acting Chair who, for the purposes of that meeting has all the powers and shall perform all the duties of the Chair.

4. Maximum Term for Chair and Vice-Chair

The individuals elected shall hold office until their successors are elected and will be eligible for re-election to the same office for up to a maximum of two one-year terms. With approval from the Minister, the chair or vice-chair may be re-elected for up to a maximum of four one-year terms. Appointments must rotate amongst participating municipalities and a member from a specific municipality cannot be elected to succeed an outgoing Chair or Vice-Chair appointed by the same municipality.

5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be held annually at the first General Meeting of the year in accordance with the Authority's Procedure for Election of Officers (Appendix 3).

All Members shall be polled by electronic or regular mail in advance of the General Meeting at which the election is to be held to determine willingness to stand for election to the position of Chair or Vice-Chair.

In the event of a vacancy occurring in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Authority shall appoint one of its Members to fill the vacancy at the next special meeting or General Meeting of the Authority, as chosen by election in accordance with the Authority's Procedure for Election of Officers (Appendix 3).

6. Appointment of Auditor

The General Membership shall appoint an auditor for the coming year at the Annual Meeting in accordance with Section 38 of the Act. The Authority shall ensure that the annual audit is prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board.

7. Appointment of Financial Institution

The General Membership shall appoint a financial institution to act as the Authority's banker by Resolution as required.

8. Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor

The General Membership shall receive and approve the Audited Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor annually for the previous year at the Annual General Meeting.

The Authority shall forward copies of the Audited Financial Statements and Report of the Auditor to Participating Municipalities and the Minister in accordance with Section 38 of the Act, and will make them available to the public on the Authority's website within 60 days of the Annual General Meeting.

9. Borrowing Resolution

If required, the Authority shall establish a borrowing resolution at the Annual General Meeting each year, and such resolution shall be in force until it is superseded by another borrowing resolution.

10. Corporate Policies

The Authority shall approve and amend corporate policies from time to time, including Human Resources Policies, for employees containing conditions of employment and benefits.

11. Apportionment Notice

The municipal apportionment due to the Authority from participating municipalities shall be communicated to those municipalities in accordance with the Act and any applicable Regulations.

12. Signing Officers

All deeds, transfers, assignments, contracts, and obligations entered into by the Authority and all cheques, promissory notes, and securities for money, shall be signed by the Chair or the Vice-Chair and the Chief Administrative Officer or the Secretary-Treasurer, with the following exceptions:

- i. Agreements, contracts, property leases or other documents required to be signed by the Authority shall be signed by the Chief Administrative Officer or the Secretary-Treasurer when properly authorized by resolution of the Authority;
- ii. Property leases, licenses, access agreements or other documents related to ongoing approved programs shall be signed by the Chief Administrative Officer or the Secretary-Treasurer;
- iii. Commitments to purchase goods and services may be signed by authorized buyers in accordance with the approved Purchasing Policy of the Authority;
- iv. Electronic Fund Transfers (EFTs) may be initiated by staff in accordance with proper authorization in the Purchasing Policy of the Authority or resolution of the Authority;
- v. Electronic signatures are considered acceptable except where expressly prohibited under the Electronic Commerce Act, 2000;
- vi. Permits issued under Regulations made under the Conservation Authorities Act may be signed by the Chief Administrative Officer or Secretary-Treasurer if so authorized by resolution of the Authority to sign and execute such documents on behalf of the Authority.
- vii. Notwithstanding the above, other documents required to be signed by the Authority may be signed by the Chief Administrative Officer, Secretary-Treasurer, or designate when properly authorized by policies, procedures, or resolution of the Authority.

Signing authority that was authorized by any previous By-law is superseded by this by-law.

13. Advisory Boards and Other Committees

In accordance with Section 18(2) of the Act, the Authority shall establish such advisory boards as required by regulation and may establish such other advisory boards or committees as it considers appropriate to study and report on specific matters.

The General Membership shall approve the terms of reference for all such advisory boards and committees, which shall include the purpose, the frequency of meetings and the number of

members required. The names of Members to serve on all Committees shall be determined by the General Membership. The Chair is an ex-officio member of every committee.

Resolutions and policies governing the operation of the Authority shall be observed in all advisory board and committee meetings.

Each advisory board or committee shall report to the General Membership, presenting any recommendations made by the advisory board or committee.

The dates of all advisory board and committee meetings shall be made available to all Members of the Authority.

When an advisory board or committee has completed its work and submitted its final report, if applicable, it dissolves automatically, unless otherwise directed by the General Membership.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee shall be appointed annually, at the Annual General Meeting, and shall meet at least twice per year, with the first meeting to take place after the Auditors have prepared the Auditors' Report, at such time and place as the Chair of the Committee shall decide.

The Audit Committee will be composed of the Chair of the Authority, the Vice-Chair, and five other members appointed by and from the General Membership. At its first meeting, the Audit Committee shall elect a Chair from its Members, excluding the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board. The terms of reference for the Audit Committee shall be reviewed annually by the General Membership and attached to the Minutes of the meeting at which they are approved or confirmed.

14. Remuneration of Members

The Authority shall establish a per-diem rate from time to time to be paid to Members appointed by participating municipalities for attendance at General Meetings and Advisory Board or Committee meetings, and at such other business functions as may be from time to time requested by the Chair, through the Secretary-Treasurer. In addition, an honorarium will be approved by the Authority for the Chair and Vice-chair as compensation for their additional responsibilities. A single per diem will be paid for attendance at more than one meeting if they occur consecutively on the same day. The following activities shall be eligible for per diem allowance under this clause:

- Attendance at meetings of municipal councils to present the Authority's Annual budget and municipal apportionment requirement, if the member does not sit on that council and when such council presentations are scheduled through the Chair's office or at the request of the General Membership;
- Attendance at meetings of working groups or committees when appointed by the General Membership to such group or committee as an "official representative" of the Authority;
- Attendance at workshops, conferences or tours hosted by the Authority or Conservation Ontario, if participation is open to all Members and registration is made through the Chair's office;
- Any other business approved as eligible for a per diem allowance by the General Membership.

In the event of a scheduled meeting being adjourned for lack of a quorum, those attending a meeting so adjourned shall be entitled to receive the standard per diem rate and expense.

The Authority shall reimburse Members' reasonable travel expenses incurred for the purpose of attending approved meetings and/or functions on behalf of the Authority, including actual cost of meals, lodging, public transportation and conference fees, as applicable.

A per-kilometre rate to be paid for use of a personal vehicle shall be approved by Resolution of the General Membership from time-to-time and shall be consistent with Canada Revenue Agency guidelines. Requests for such reimbursements shall be submitted on a Per Diem & Expense Claim Sheet monthly with the distance travelled entered for each meeting and allowable expenses shown. Each Member must sign a certification printed on the sheet that the information is correct.

The Chair may submit monthly expense claims, which will be reviewed and signed by the Chief Administrative Officer, the Secretary-Treasurer, and the Vice-Chair. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the Chair's expense claims conform to any policies that have been established by the Authority, are within the approved budget, and are supported with appropriate documentation.

Remuneration for the member appointed by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector shall be at the expense and discretion of the Province.

15. Retention of Records

The Authority shall keep full and accurate records including, but not limited to:

- i. Minutes of all meetings of the Authority, including registries of statements of interests in accordance with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act;
- ii. Assets, liabilities, receipts, and disbursements of the Authority and Financial Statements and Reports of the Auditors;
- iii. Human Resources Files for all employees and Members as applicable;
- iv. Workplace Health and Safety documents including workplace inspections, workplace accidents, investigations, etc.;
- v. Electronic Communications including emails
- vi. Contracts and Agreements entered into by the Authority;
- vii. Strategic Plans and other documents providing organizational direction
- viii. Projects of the Authority;
- ix. Technical Studies and data gathered in support of Programs of the Authority;
- x. Legal Proceedings involving the Authority;
- xi. Incidents of personal injury or property damage involving the Authority and/or members of the public on Authority property.

Such records shall be retained and protected in accordance with all applicable laws and the ~~Retention of~~ Records Retention Policy of the Authority as approved by the General Membership from time-to-time.

16. Records Available to Public

Records of the Authority shall be made available to the public in a manner that is consistent with existing legal obligations, restrictions, and requirements, including *Municipal Freedom of*

Information and Protection of Personal Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and O.Reg. 400/22 Information Requirements.

The Chair of the Authority shall act as head of the Authority for the purposes of MFIPPA and responsibility for administration related to MFIPPA shall be delegated to the CAO.

17. By-law Review

In accordance with the Act, these by-laws shall be reviewed by the Authority to ensure the by-laws are in compliance with the Act and any other relevant law. The General Membership shall review the by-laws on a biennial basis to ensure best management practices in governance are being followed

18. By-law Available to Public

In accordance with the Act, the Authority shall make its by-laws available to the public on the Authority's website. By-laws shall also be available for review by any member of the public at the Authority's administration centre or provided in alternative formats, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, if requested by interested parties.

19. Enforcement of By-laws and Policies

The Members shall respect and adhere to all applicable by-laws and policies (for example, the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest). The Authority may take reasonable measures to enforce its by-laws and policies, including the enforcement mechanisms under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

20. Indemnification of Members, Officers and Employees

The Authority undertakes and agrees to indemnify and save harmless its Members, Officers, and Employees and their heirs and legal representatives, respectively, from and against all costs, charges, and expenses, including all amounts paid to settle an action or satisfy any judgment, reasonably incurred by any such Member, Officer, or Employee in respect of any civil, criminal or administrative action or proceeding to which any such Member, Officer, or Employee is made a party by reason of being a Member, Officer, or Employee of the Authority (except in respect of an action by or on behalf of the Authority to procure a judgment in its favour) if;

- such Member, Officer, or Employee acted honestly, in good faith with a view to the best interests of the Authority and within the scope of such Member's, Officer's, or Employee's duties and responsibilities, and,
- in the case of a criminal or administrative action or proceeding that is enforced by a monetary penalty that such Member, Officer, or Employee had reasonable grounds for believing that the conduct was lawful.

C. Meeting Procedures

The Meeting Procedures below governing the procedure of the Authority shall be observed in Executive Committee and Advisory Board meetings, as far as they are applicable, and the words Executive Committee or Advisory Board may be substituted for the word Authority as applicable

1. Rules of Procedure

In all matters of procedure not specifically dealt with under the Act and this By-law, the current edition of Bourinot's Rules of Order will be followed.

The Authority may choose to conduct its business as a committee of the whole. The Committee of the Whole will consist of all Members of the Authority and will be chaired by the Vice-Chair. All standing "Rules of Debate" will be observed in Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole may make recommendations for consideration by the General Membership.

2. Notice of Meeting

The General Membership shall meet at least once a month at the Authority's Head Office unless otherwise specified, and at such time as the Chair decides. The General Membership shall approve a schedule for regular meetings in advance. The Secretary-Treasurer shall send Notice of regular meetings to all Members at least five calendar days in advance of a meeting. Notice of all regular or special meetings of the General Membership, or its Executive Committee or Advisory Board, as far as they are applicable, shall be made available to the public as soon as possible after its delivery to General Membership.

Notice of any meeting shall indicate the time and place of that meeting and the agenda for the meeting. Notices of meetings shall include a notation that members are to contact the office if unable to attend.

All material and correspondence to be dealt with by the Authority at a meeting will be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer 7 days in advance of the meeting where it is to be dealt with if it is to be included in the published agenda, or 2 days in advance if it is to be introduced at the meeting. All communications on any subject may be referred to staff or a committee without any motion or debate unless otherwise ordered by the Authority.

The Chair or the Secretary-Treasurer may, by notice in writing or email delivered to the members to be received by them at least 24 hours before the hour appointed for the meeting, postpone or cancel any meeting of an Advisory Board or other committee until the next scheduled date for the specific Advisory Board or committee affected.

The Chair or the Secretary-Treasurer may, if it appears that a storm or like occurrence will prevent the members from attending a meeting, postpone that meeting by advising as many members as can be reached or, if warranted, hold the meeting electronically provided quorum and public participation can be met. Postponement shall not be for any longer than the next regularly scheduled meeting date.

3. Special Meetings

The Chair may, at his/her pleasure, call a special meeting of the Authority as necessary on three calendar days notice in writing or email. That notice shall state the business of the special meeting and only that business shall be considered at that special meeting. Any member, with 50% support of the other members, may also request the Chair to call a meeting of the Authority and the Chair will not refuse.

A special meeting may be held to amend the by-law.

Members of the Authority can participate electronically in any special meeting that occurs. A member of the Authority that is participating electronically in a special meeting will be counted in determining whether a quorum of members is present at any time during the meeting.

The agenda for special meetings of the Authority shall be prepared as directed by the Chair.

4. Meetings Open to Public

All meetings of the General Membership shall be open to the public. All electronic and hybrid meetings of the Board of Directors, and other meetings as directed by the Chair, will be webcast, except in times of technological failure e.g. Internet outage, system crash. Failure to webcast does not call a meeting into question.

A meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered is identified in the closed meeting section of the Agenda or arises during a meeting requiring that it be closed to the public at the time that the matter is raised at a meeting, and the subject matter meets the criteria for a closed meeting as defined in this by-law.

5. Agenda for Meetings

Authority staff, under the supervision of the Secretary-Treasurer, shall prepare an agenda for all regular meetings of the Authority that shall include, insofar as they are applicable to the meeting but not necessarily limited to, the following headings:

1. Call to order by Chair
2. Certification by Secretary-Treasurer that there is a quorum of Members present
3. Review of Agenda
4. Declarations of pecuniary interest
5. Adoption of minutes of previous meeting
6. Hearing of delegations
7. Presentations
8. Correspondence
9. 1st & 2nd readings of By-laws*
10. Presentation of Reports
11. Committee of the Whole
12. Election of officers*
13. Adoption of Projects*
14. 3rd reading of By-laws*
15. Other business
16. Closed Meeting
17. Adjournment

**if applicable*

Agendas for meetings shall be forwarded to all Members at least five calendar days in advance of the meeting. Such agendas shall be made available to the public on the Authority's website at the same time unless the meeting is closed to the public in accordance with this by-law. Such agendas shall also be available in alternative formats, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, if requested by interested parties.

6. Quorum

At any meeting of the General Membership, a quorum consists of one-half of the Members appointed by the Participating Municipalities, except where there are fewer than six such Members, in which case three such Members constitute a quorum. At any advisory board or committee meeting, a quorum consists of one-half of the Members of the advisory board or

committee. Note: the Member appointed by the Minister to represent the agricultural sector, if applicable, is not counted when determining quorum.

If there is no quorum within thirty minutes after the time appointed for the meeting, the Chair for the meeting shall declare the meeting adjourned due to a lack of a quorum or shall recess until quorum arrives, and the recording secretary shall record the names of the Members present and absent.

If during an Authority or Advisory Board or Committee meeting a quorum is lost, then the Chair shall declare that the meeting shall stand recessed or adjourned, until the date of the next regular meeting or other meeting called in accordance with the provisions of this by-law.

Where the number of Members who are disabled from participating in a meeting due to the declaration of a conflict of interest is such that at that meeting the remaining Members are not of sufficient number to constitute a quorum, the remaining number of Members shall be deemed to constitute a quorum, provided such number is not less than two.

7. Order of Business

The business of the Authority shall be taken up in the order in which it stands on the agenda unless otherwise decided by a majority of those Members present.

No Member shall present any matter to the Authority for its consideration unless the matter appears on the agenda for the meeting of the Authority or leave is granted to present the matter by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Members present.

8. Debate

The Authority shall observe the following procedures for discussion/debate on any matter coming before it:

- a) A Member shall be recognized by the Chair prior to speaking;
- b) Where two or more Members rise to speak, the Chair shall designate the Member who has the floor, who shall be the Member who in the opinion of the Chair was first recognized;
- c) All questions and points of discussion shall be directed through the Chair;
- d) Where a motion is presented, it shall be moved and seconded before debate;
- e) Any Member may require the question or motion under debate to be read at any time during the debate, except while a Member is speaking;
- f) No Member shall speak more than once to the same question without leave from the Chair, except in explanation of a material part of the speech;
- g) A Member is allowed a time limit of ten minutes to speak on any given point, and extensions of five minute intervals may be granted at the discretion of the Chair;
- h) Any Member may ask a question of the previous speaker through the Chair;
- i) The Member who has presented a motion, other than a motion to amend or dispose of a motion, may speak again to the motion immediately before the Chair puts the motion to a vote;
- j) When a motion is under debate, no motion shall be received other than a motion to amend, to defer action, to refer the question, to take a vote, to adjourn, or to extend the hour of closing the proceedings;
- k) When a motion is under consideration, only one amendment is permitted at a time.

9. Matters of Precedence

The following matters shall have precedence over the usual order of business:

- a) a point of order;
- b) matter of privilege;
- c) a matter of clarification;
- d) a motion to suspend a rule of procedure or to request compliance with the rules of procedure;
- e) a motion that the question be put to a vote;
- f) a motion to adjourn.

When a member raises a point of order, he/she shall ask leave of the Chair to raise a point of order and after leave is granted shall state the point of order to the Chair and thereafter no Member shall address the Chair on the point of order except for the purpose of appealing the Chair's decision.

Where there is no appeal, the decision of the Chair shall be final, and where there is an appeal, the Authority shall decide the question without debate and the decision of the majority of the Members present shall be final.

10. Electronic Meetings and Participation

Electronic meetings are permitted and the Meeting Procedures identified in this by-law apply.

In-person attendance at meetings is preferred, however, a Member can participate electronically in a meeting that is open or closed to the public and in either case may be counted in determining whether or not a quorum of members is present at any point in time, with the exception of the member appointed by the Minister who is not counted when determining quorum. Electronic meetings must permit all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.

11. Members' Attendance

The Authority shall provide a listing of Members' attendance at scheduled meetings of the Authority to the Participating Municipalities semi-annually.

Upon a Member's vacancy due to death, incapacity or resignation occurring in any office of the Authority, the Authority shall request the municipality that was represented by that Member appoint a Member replacement.

If a Member is unable to attend any meeting and wishes to bring any additional information or opinion pertaining to an agenda item to the General Membership, the Member shall address in writing or email to the Chair or Secretary-Treasurer such correspondence prior to the start of the meeting. The correspondence shall be circulated in advance, if possible, or distributed at the meeting by the Secretary-Treasurer without comment or explanations.

When a member's appointment is due to expire, the appropriate municipality shall be notified at least 30 days before the date of such expiration.

12. Delegations

Any person or organization who wishes to address the Authority may make a written request ~~in writing or email~~ to the Secretary-Treasurer on the prescribed form. ~~The request should include a brief statement of the issue or matter involved and indicate the name of the proposed speaker(s).~~

If such request is received eight (408) days in advance of a scheduled meeting, and the delegation is scheduled to proceed, the delegation and the subject of the delegation shall be listed on the published agenda.

Delegations will be scheduled at the discretion of the Secretary-Treasurer in consultation with the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer, subject to:

- Volume of material on agenda
- Number of requests for a specific meeting date
- Urgency of request
- Subject matter – no delegation shall speak on a matter that is not within the jurisdiction of the Authority
- No delegation shall be made relating to litigation or potential litigation matters

Any person or organization requesting an opportunity to address the Authority, but not having ~~made a written request to do~~submitted the prescribed form so in the timelines specified above, may register as a delegation ~~through the Office of the CAO~~ up to two business days immediately preceding a meeting of the General Membership, subject to the approval of the Secretary-Treasurer in consultation with the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer utilizing the above-listed criteria ~~or shall be listed on the published agenda for the following meeting.~~

Registered delegations may address the Authority by joining the meeting electronically or in person. Presentation materials related to the any delegation ~~may~~must be shared ~~with Authority Members if the delegation provides them~~ at least two business days in advance of the meeting to be circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

Unregistered delegations present at the meeting in person may request to speak and will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes to address the Board, if approved by a majority of members present at the meeting. Unregistered delegations will not be allowed to present materials electronically or provide handouts.

Except by leave of the Chair or appeal by the leave of the meeting, each individual delegation shall be limited to one (1) speaker for not more than five (5) minutes. A group delegation of more than three (3) speakers presenting together will be limited to a total maximum of ten (10) minutes. When a large number of delegations wish to speak on the same topic, the time limits may be adjusted at the discretion of the Chair.

Speakers will be requested not to repeat what has been said by previous speakers at the meeting. A returning delegation will only be allowed to speak again if new, relevant information has become available since their previous presentation. The Chair may choose to end a returning delegation's presentation if, in the opinion of the Chair, the new information being presented is not relevant to a decision facing the General Membership.

Members of the public who constitute an audience during an Authority meeting may not:

- Address the Authority without permission;
- Interrupt any speech or action of the Members, or any other person addressing the Authority;
- Display or have in their possession any picket signs, placards, or other forms of written messages deemed inappropriate by the Chair;
- Speak disrespectfully to or about any person;

- Use offensive words

In exceptional circumstances, when the Chair and the Secretary-Treasurer reasonably determine that a person requesting to speak at a meeting is likely to engage in unreasonable or offensive conduct, make unreasonable or offensive statements or demands, repeatedly speak on a subject matter that is not within the Authority's jurisdiction, or otherwise misuse the privilege of speaking to the Authority Members, that person will not be allowed to appear as a Delegation at the meeting.

13. Hearings and Permit Issuance

Hearings

When a hearing is required under Part V, VI, or VIII of the Conservation Authorities Act, or under the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions, and Permits Regulations, the General Membership shall form a tribunal for the purpose of such a hearing. When hearings are to be held individual notice of hearing shall be sent by registered mail or email to the applicant, with a copy by ordinary mail or email to the applicable municipal clerk.

When a hearing is held, a letter of decision including the reasons for the decision and a copy of the resolution that includes the mover and seconder of the resolution shall be sent to the applicant by registered mail or email. A copy shall be sent by regular mail or email to those who received the hearing notice.

Permit Issuance

When a permit is approved or extended, the Authority will retain a record of the permit and a copy shall be sent by regular mail or email to the applicant, and to the appropriate municipal department.

14. Annual Meeting

The Authority shall designate one meeting of the General Membership each year as the annual meeting to be held prior to March 1 and shall include the following items on the agenda, in addition to the normal course of business:

- i. Appointment of the auditor for the upcoming year
- ii. Receipt of the most recent report of the Audit Committee
- iii. Receipt and Approval of the Auditor's Report and Audited Financial Statements for the prior year
- iv. Approval of the Budget for the current year
- v. Approval of Provision for Borrowing for the current year
- vi. Confirmation of By-laws passed, repealed, amended, or re-enacted during the past year.

15. Meetings with Closed "In Camera" Sessions

Every meeting of the General Membership, Executive Committee and Advisory Boards, if applicable, shall be open to the public as per Section 15(3) of the Act, subject to the exceptions set out below.

Meetings may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to:

- a) The security of the property of the Authority;
- b) Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including employees of the Authority;
- c) A proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the Authority;
- d) Labour relations or employee negotiations;

- e) Litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals (e.g. Local Planning Appeal Tribunal or Ontario Land Tribunal), affecting the Authority;
- f) Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege;
- g) A matter in respect of which the General Membership, Executive Committee, Advisory Board, or committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act;
- h) Information explicitly supplied in confidence to the Authority by Canada, a province or territory, or a Crown agency of any of them;
- i) A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial, or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the Authority, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization;
- j) A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the Authority and has monetary value or potential monetary value; or
- k) A position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the Authority.

The Authority shall close a meeting if the subject matter relates to the consideration of a request under MFIPPA, and the designated head of the Authority for the purposes of MFIPPA is present.

Before holding a meeting or part of a meeting that is to be closed to the public, the Members shall state by resolution during the open session of the meeting that there will be a meeting closed to the public and the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting. Once matters have been dealt with in a closed meeting, the General Membership shall reconvene in an open session.

The General Membership shall not vote during a meeting that is closed to the public, unless:

- a) the meeting meets the criteria outlined in this by-law to be closed to the public; and
- b) the vote is for a procedural matter or for giving directions or instructions to Officers, employees or agents of Authority.

Any materials presented to the General Membership during a closed meeting shall be returned to the Secretary-Treasurer prior to departing from the meeting and shall be treated in accordance with the Authority's procedures for handling confidential material.

A meeting of the Authority, advisory board or other committee may also be closed to the public if:

- a) the meeting is held for the purpose of educating or training the Members, and
- b) at the meeting, no Member discusses or otherwise deals with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of the authority, advisory board or other committee.

16. Voting

In accordance with Section 16 of the Act:

- a) each Member is entitled to one vote, including the Chair, and
- b) a majority vote of the Members present at any meeting is required upon all matters coming before the meeting.

Where a member has been appointed by Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector, the member shall not vote on:

- a) a resolution to enlarge the Authority's area of jurisdiction;
- b) a resolution to amalgamate the Authority with another Conservation Authority;

- c) a resolution to dissolve the Authority; or
- d) a resolution related to any budgetary matter.

If any Member who is qualified to vote abstains from voting, except during a recorded vote, they shall be deemed to have voted neither in favour nor opposed to the question, which will not alter the number of votes required for a majority.

On a tie vote, the motion is lost.

Interrelated motions shall be voted on in the order specified in Bourinot's Rules of Order.

Unless a Member requests a recorded vote, a vote shall be by a show of hands or such other means as the Chair may call. No question shall be voted upon more than once at any meeting unless a recorded vote is requested.

If a member present at a meeting at the time of the vote requests immediately before or after the taking of the vote that the vote be recorded, each member present, except a member who is disqualified from voting by any Act, shall announce his or her vote openly answering "yes" or "no" to the question, and the Secretary-Treasurer shall record each vote. Any Members who did not stand in a recorded vote will be recorded as voting in favour.

At the meeting of the Authority at which the municipal apportionment is to be approved, the Secretary-Treasurer shall conduct the vote to approve the apportionment by a Weighted Majority of the Members present and eligible to vote, in accordance with *O.Regulation 402/22 Budget and Apportionment*. The vote to approve the budget shall also be conducted by a Weighted Majority of the Members present and eligible to vote.

Where a question under consideration contains more than one item, upon the request of any Member, a vote upon each item shall be taken separately.

While the Chair is putting a question to the vote, no Member shall leave his/her seat or make any noise or disturbance until the result of the vote is declared.

Except as provided in Section B, Paragraph 5 of this By-law (Election of Chair and Vice-Chair), no vote shall be taken by ballot or by any other method of secret voting, and every vote so taken is of no effect.

17. Notice of Motion

Written notice of motion to be made at an Authority advisory board or committee meeting may be given to the Secretary-Treasurer by any Member of the Authority not less than seven business days prior to the date and time of the meeting and shall be forthwith placed on the agenda of the next meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer shall include such notice of motion in full in the agenda for the meeting concerned.

Recommendations included in reports of advisory boards or committees that have been included in an agenda for a meeting of the General Membership shall constitute notice of motion for that meeting.

Recommendations included in staff reports that have been included in an agenda for a meeting of the General Membership shall constitute notice of motion for that meeting.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, any motion or other business may be introduced for consideration of the Authority provided that it is made clear that to delay such motion or other business for the consideration of an appropriate advisory board or committee would not be in the best interest of

the Authority and that the introduction of the motion or other business shall be upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Authority present.

18. Motion to Reconsider

If a motion is made to reconsider a previous motion, a two-thirds majority vote shall be required in order for reconsideration to take place. If a motion to reconsider is passed, the original motion shall then be placed on the agenda at a future meeting to be debated and voted upon, and the result of that vote, based on a simple majority, shall supersede.

19. Duties of the Meeting Chair

It shall be the duty of the Chair, with respect to any meetings over which the Chair presides, to:

- a) Take the chair and call the members to order when a quorum is first present after the hour fixed for a meeting of the Authority;
- b) Preserve order and decide all questions of order, subject to appeal; and without argument or comment, state the rule applicable to any point of order if called upon to do so;
- c) Ensure that the public in attendance does not in any way interfere or disrupt the proceedings of the Members;
- d) Receive and submit to a vote all motions presented by the Members, which do not contravene the rules of order or regulations of the Authority;
- e) Announce the results of the vote on any motions so presented;
- f) Adjourn the meeting when business is concluded.

The Chair who opens the meeting shall remain Chair of the meeting until its adjournment. If, however, the Chair for any reason wishes to vacate the chair, either temporarily or for the balance of the meeting, the Chair may appoint a Member of the Authority to take the chair in their place.

The Chair will vacate the chair while the Members are sitting as a Committee of the Whole, and, while nominations are being held for the office of Chair, Vice-Chair, or any and all other elected officers of the Authority. The Authority shall appoint a person other than a Member of the Authority to conduct such elections; who shall appoint such clerks and returning officers as is necessary to assist in holding the elections.

20. Conduct of Members

Members shall maintain a high standard for conduct and at all times comply with applicable laws and the Authority's Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).

No Member at any meeting of the Authority shall:

- a) Speak in a manner that is discriminatory in nature based on an individual's race, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, colour, marital status, family status or disability;
- b) Leave their seat or make any noise or disturbance while a vote is being taken or until the result is declared;
- c) Interrupt a Member while speaking, except to raise a point of order or a question of privilege;
- d) Speak disrespectfully or use offensive words against the Authority, the Members, staff, or any member of the public;
- e) Speak beyond the question(s) under debate;

- f) Resist the rules of order or disobey the decision of the Chair on the questions or order or practices or upon the interpretation of the By-laws.

21. Minutes of Meetings

The Secretary-Treasurer shall undertake to have a recording secretary in attendance at meetings of the Authority, the Executive Committee and each advisory board or committee. The recording secretary shall make a record in the form of minutes of the meeting proceedings and in particular shall record all motions considered at the meeting.

If a recording secretary is not present in a closed session, the Secretary-Treasurer, or designate, shall take notes of any direction provided, for endorsement by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Minutes of all meetings shall include the time and place of the meeting, a list of those present and shall state all motions presented together with the mover and seconder and voting results.

The Secretary-Treasurer or designate shall include draft minutes of the previous meeting available to each member of the Authority at the same time as agendas for the next meeting are distributed. Copies of all non-confidential minutes shall be posted as part of the agenda package on the Authority's website within 30 days following the previous meeting.

After the minutes have been approved by resolution, original copies shall be signed by the Secretary-Treasurer and the Chair. Such minutes shall also be available for review by any member of the public at the Authority's administration centre or provided in alternative formats, in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, if requested by interested parties.

Meeting recordings shall be made publicly available for later viewing, except in times of technological failure. Failure to produce a recording does not call the meeting into question.

D. Approval of By-law and Revocation of Previous By-law(s)

By-law number 2-2024 is hereby repealed;

By-law number 1-2025 shall come into force on the 1st day of January, 2025

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME

Date: November 22, 2024

READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED

Date: November 22, 2024

Signed:

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer

E. Appendices to the Administrative By-law

Appendix 1 - Code of Conduct

1. Background

The Grand River Conservation Authority demands a high level of integrity and ethical conduct from its General Membership. The Authority's reputation has relied upon the good judgement of individual Members. A written Code of Conduct helps to ensure that all Members share a common basis for acceptable conduct. Formalized standards help to provide a reference guide and a supplement to legislative parameters within which Members must operate. Further, they enhance public confidence that Members operate from a base of integrity, justice and courtesy.

The Code of Conduct is a general standard. It augments the laws which govern the behaviour of Members, and it is not intended to replace personal ethics.

This Code of Conduct will also assist Members in dealing with confronting situations not adequately addressed or that may be ambiguous in Authority resolutions, regulations, or policies and procedures.

The agricultural representative appointed by the Minister will also be required to follow the provincial ethical framework set out for government public appointees in the Management Board of Cabinet's Agencies and Appointments Directive.

2. General

All Members, whether municipal councillors or appointed representatives of a municipality, or appointed by the Minister as a representative of the agricultural sector, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the Authority.

All Members shall serve in a conscientious and diligent manner. No Member shall use the influence of office for any purpose other than for the exercise of his/her official duties.

It is expected that Members adhere to a code of conduct that:

- i. upholds the mandate, vision and mission of the Authority;
- ii. considers the Authority's jurisdiction in its entirety, including their appointing municipality;
- iii. respects confidentiality;
- iv. approaches all Authority issues with an open mind, with consideration for the organization as a whole;
- v. exercises the powers of a Member when acting in a meeting of the Authority;
- vi. respects the democratic process and respects decisions of the General Membership, Advisory Boards and other committees;
- vii. declares any direct or indirect pecuniary interest or conflict of interest when one exists or may exist; and
- viii. conducts oneself in a manner which reflects respect and professional courtesy and does not use offensive language in or against the Authority or against any Member or any Authority staff.

3. Gifts and Benefits

Members shall not accept fees, gifts, hospitality or personal benefits that are connected directly or indirectly with the performance of duties.

4. Confidentiality

The members shall be governed at all times by the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom and Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

All information, documentation or deliberations received, reviewed, or taken in a closed meeting are confidential.

Members shall not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, either in verbal or written form, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office, except when required by law to do so.

Members shall not permit any persons, other than those who are entitled thereto, to have access to information which is confidential.

In the instance where a member vacates their position on the General Membership they will continue to be bound by MFIPPA requirements.

Particular care should be exercised in protecting information such as the following:

- i. Human Resources matters;
- ii. Information about suppliers provided for evaluation that might be useful to other suppliers;
- iii. Matters relating to the legal affairs of the Authority;
- iv. Information provided in confidence from an Indigenous community, or a record that if released could reasonably be expected to prejudice the conduct of relations between an Indigenous community and the Authority;
- v. Sources of complaints where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence;
- vi. Items under negotiation;
- vii. Schedules of prices in tenders or requests for proposals;
- viii. Appraised or estimated values with respect to the Authority's proposed property acquisitions or dispositions;
- ix. Information deemed to be "personal information" under MFIPPA.

The list above is provided for example and is not exhaustive.

5. Use of Authority Property

No Member shall use for personal purposes any Authority property, equipment, supplies, or services of consequence other than for purposes connected with the discharge of Authority duties or associated community activities of which the Authority has been advised.

6. Work of a Political Nature

No Member shall use Authority facilities, services or property for his/her election or re-election campaign to any position or office within the Authority or otherwise.

7. Conduct at Authority Meetings

During meetings of the Authority, Members shall conduct themselves with decorum. Respect for delegations and for fellow Members requires that all Members show courtesy and not distract from the business of the Authority during presentations and when others have the floor.

8. Influence on Staff

Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff work for the Authority as a whole and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective, without undue influence.

9. Business Relations

No Member shall borrow money from any person who regularly does business with the Authority unless such person is an institution or company whose shares are publicly traded and who is regularly in the business of lending money.

No Member shall act as a paid agent before the Authority or an advisory board or committee of the Authority, except in compliance with the terms of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

10. Encouragement of Respect for the Authority and its Regulations

Members shall represent the Authority in a respectful way and encourage public respect for the Authority and its Regulations.

11. Harassment

It is the policy of the Authority that all persons be treated fairly in the workplace in an environment free of discrimination and of personal and sexual harassment. Harassment of another Member, staff or any member of the public is misconduct. Members shall follow the Authority's Harassment Policy as amended from time-to-time.

Examples of harassment that will not be tolerated include: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts related to an individual's race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical or mental disabilities, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. The Authority will also not tolerate the display of pornographic, racist, or offensive signs or images; practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment; unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit and any other prohibited grounds under the provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

12. Breach of Code of Conduct

Should a Member breach the Code of Conduct, they shall advise the Chair and Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, as soon as possible after the breach.

Should a Member allege that another Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated to the Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing. In the absence of the Chair, or if a Member alleges that the Chair has breached the Code of Conduct, the said breach shall be communicated to the Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing.

Should a member of the public or a municipality allege that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct, the party making the allegation will be directed to follow the notification procedure outlined above.

Any breach, or alleged breach, of the Code of Conduct shall be investigated in accordance with the Enforcement of By-laws and Policies procedure outlined or referred to in the Authority's Administrative By-law.

Appendix 2 - Conflict of Interest

1. *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*

The Authority Members commit themselves and the Authority to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct when acting as the General Membership. The Authority and the Members are bound by the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. This appendix to the by-law is intended to assist Members in understanding their obligations. Members are required to review the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* on a regular basis.

2. *Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest*

Where a Member, either on his or her own behalf or while acting for, by, with or through another, has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any matter and is present at a meeting of the Authority, Advisory Board or committee at which the matter is the subject of consideration, the Member:

- a) shall, prior to any consideration of the matter at the meeting, disclose the pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof;
- b) shall not take part in the discussion of, or vote on any question in respect of the matter;
- c) shall not attempt in any way whether before, during or after the meeting to influence the voting on any such question, and,
- d) shall file a written statement of the interest and its general nature to the Secretary-Treasurer at the meeting or as soon as possible afterwards.

3. *Chair's Conflict of Interest or Pecuniary Interest*

Where the Chair of a meeting discloses a conflict of interest with respect to a matter under consideration at a meeting, another Member shall be appointed to chair that portion of the meeting by Resolution.

4. *Closed Meetings*

Where a meeting is not open to the public, a Member who has declared a conflict of interest shall leave the meeting for the part of the meeting during which the matter is under consideration.

5. *Member Absent*

Where the interest of a Member has not been disclosed by reason of their absence from the particular meeting, the Member shall disclose their interest and otherwise comply at the first meeting of the Authority, Advisory Board or Committee, as the case may be, attended by them after the particular meeting.

6. *Disclosure Recorded in Minutes*

The recording secretary shall record in reasonable detail the particulars of any disclosure of conflict of interest or pecuniary interest made by Members and whether the Member withdrew from the discussion of the matter. Such record shall appear in the minutes/notes of that particular meeting of the General Membership, Advisory board, or committee, as the case may be.

7. *Pecuniary Interest Registry*

A registry will be kept by the Secretary-Treasurer of each written statement of pecuniary interest filed along with a copy of each declaration recorded in the minutes. The registry shall be made available for public inspection upon request submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer.

8. *Breach of Conflict of Interest Policy*

Should a Member breach the Conflict of Interest Policy, they shall advise the Chair and Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer as soon as possible after the breach.

Should a Member allege that another Member has breached the Conflict of Interest Policy, the said breach shall be communicated to the Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing. In the absence of the Chair, or if a Member alleges that the Chair has breached the Conflict of Interest Policy, the said breach shall be communicated to the Vice-Chair, with a copy to the Secretary-Treasurer, in writing.

Should a member of the public or a municipality allege that a Member has breached the Conflict of Interest Policy, the party making the allegation will be directed to follow the notification procedure outlined above.

Any breach, or alleged breach, of the Conflict of Interest Policy shall be investigated in accordance with the Enforcement of By-laws and Policies procedure outlined or referred to in the Authority's Administrative By-law.

Appendix 3 - Procedure for Election of Officers

1. Voting

Voting shall be by secret ballot and no Members may vote by proxy.

2. Acting Chair

The General Membership shall appoint a person, who is not a voting Member, as Acting Chair or Returning Officer, for the Election of Officers.

3. Scrutineer(s)

The appointment of one or more scrutineers is required to count ballots, should an election be required. All ballots shall be destroyed by the scrutineers afterward. The Acting Chair shall call a motion for the appointment of one or more persons, who are not Members or employees of the Authority, to act as scrutineers. A Member, who will not stand for election, may be appointed as an additional scrutineer if requested.

4. Election Procedures

The Acting Chair shall advise the Members that the election will be conducted in accordance with the Act as follows:

- a) The elections shall be conducted in the following order:
 - i. Election of the Chair, who shall be a Member of the Authority appointed by a participating municipality
 - ii. Election of the Vice-chair, who shall be Members of the Authority appointed by participating municipalities.
- b) The Acting Chair shall ask for nominations for each position;
- c) Only current Members of the Authority who are present may vote;
- d) Nominations shall be called three (3) times and will only require a mover;
- e) The closing of nominations shall require both a mover and a seconder;
- f) Each Member nominated shall be asked to accept the nomination. The Member must be present to accept the nomination unless the Member has advised the Secretary-Treasurer in writing or by email in advance of the election of their willingness to accept the nomination.

If one Nominee:

- g) If only one nominee the individual shall be declared into the position by acclamation.

If More than One Nominee:

- h) In the event of an election, each nominee shall be permitted not more than three (3) minutes to speak for the office, in the order of the alphabetical listing by surnames.
- i) Upon the acceptance by nominees to stand for election to the position of office, ballots shall be distributed to the Members by the scrutineers for the purpose of election and the Acting Chair shall ask the Members to write the name of one individual only on the ballot.
- j) The scrutineers shall collect the ballots, leave the meeting to count the ballots, return, and advise the Acting Chair who was elected with more than 50% of the vote.

A majority vote shall be required for election. If there are more than two nominees, and upon the first vote no nominee receives the majority required for election, the name of the person with the

least number of votes shall be removed from further consideration for the office and new ballots shall be distributed. In the case of a vote where no nominee receives the majority required for election and where two or more nominees are tied with the least number of votes, a special vote shall be taken to decide which one of such tied nominees' names shall be dropped from the list of names to be voted on in the next vote.

Should there be a tie vote between two remaining candidates, new ballots shall be distributed and a second vote held. Should there still be a tie after the second ballot a third vote shall be held. Should there be a tie after the third vote, the election of the office shall be decided by lot drawn by the Acting Chair or designate.

Delegation Request Form

Members of the public can address the board at any public board meeting by registering in advance as a delegation or by submitting formal correspondence by email or letter. We encourage you to first contact staff to address your concerns, as some matters do not require board discussion. [Contact us](#) by email or by phone to be directed to appropriate staff. If it is determined that delegating is preferred or required, staff may also prepare a report for the agenda package.

After speaking with staff, please submit the form below. We will review your request and contact you for confirmation and to provide further details about attending the meeting.

Board meetings are held on the fourth Friday of each month, excluding July when there is no scheduled meeting, and December when it is typically earlier due to holidays. To ensure your name is listed on the published agenda, and to ensure your handouts or presentation are included for distribution, your request must be submitted by noon at least eight (8) days before the published meeting date. We recognize that it is not always possible to meet that deadline, so delegations may register up to two (2) business days prior to the scheduled meeting. When possible, registered names will be published in the addendum. Members of the public may also attend the meeting in-person and request to speak as an unregistered delegation. If approved by the Chair, unregistered delegations are provided three (3) minutes to speak.

Upcoming meeting dates can be found in our [Board Meeting Calendar](#).

Full Name *

Please enter your email address or phone number (whichever is your preferred method of contact) *

Please share a brief summary of the matter you wish to address as a delegation *

Are you delegating as an individual, or as a group? If 'group', please type the number of people and provide their names.

Date of Meeting *

Have you contacted staff to discuss this matter? *

Yes

No

We encourage you to contact staff to address your concern before you register. Staff can help navigate matters and provide valuable input. If after speaking with staff you would still prefer to address the board, you can return here to complete the form.

Do you have additional information such as digital documents, or a PowerPoint presentation for the Board to review as part of your presentation? *

Yes

No

If available, please upload your additional documents. If not available, please note that they must be submitted by email at least 48 hours before the meeting. Late items will not be circulated.

Allowed extensions pdf, doc, docx

Notice of Collection: The personal information provided in this form is collected under the authority of the Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.27 and will be used for the purpose of registering as a delegation of a public board meeting in accordance with the Grand River Conservation Authority's administrative by law. Questions about this form should be directed to the executive assistant 519-621-2761, 400 Clyde Rd. Cambridge, Ontario N1R 5S7

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-35

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Senior Leadership Team

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-35 – Senior Leadership Team be received as information.

Summary:

The Board-appointed Chief Administrative Officer and Secretary-Treasurer, Deputy CAO oversee the operations of the GRCA with a senior leadership team. The GRCA has 11 Departments within the organization. These departments are led by Managers and comprise programs and services that help achieve the organization's mandate.

Attached to this report is a copy of the Senior Leadership Team organizational chart.

Report:

To achieve the GRCA's vision of a healthy watershed, each department within the organization plays a vital role in managing watershed resources, supporting sustainable growth, and working collaboratively with our municipal partners and key stakeholders. Led by dedicated members of the Senior Leadership Team, these departments deliver on the Conservation Authority's critical programs and services. Half of the organization's departments report to the Secretary-Treasurer, Deputy CAO, while the others report to the CAO.

Below is a summary of each department's key functions and a chart of the Senior Leadership Team.

Departments that Report to the Deputy CAO:

Department of Finance

The Department of Finance is an administrative function encompassing the responsibility for finance, payroll, and office services. At the GRCA, the Finance Department provides leadership as it relates to financial matters, including the management of reporting and analysis requests, adherence to Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS), compliance with regulatory requirements, direction on financial internal controls, the streamlining of financial processes, and training on the use of financial tools.

The Manager of Finance is Kayleigh Keighan.

Department of Human Resources

At the GRCA, this function is part of the leadership team, playing a role in organizational development, which helps to foster the corporate culture and ensures the GRCA appropriately builds teams and inspires employee empowerment. The Human Resources management function adds value to the strategic vision of the GRCA by ensuring employee programs impact the GRCA in positive, measurable ways, enabling employees to contribute effectively and productively to the organization's overall strategic direction and accomplish the GRCA's goals and objectives.

The Manager of this department is Krista Bunn.

Department of Digital Information and Innovation

In today's modern world, information technology involving the development, maintenance and use of computer systems, software, and other communications infrastructure plays a vital role in the success of any organization. At the GRCA, the Digital Information and Innovation department leads and oversees all the GRCA's information management activities, providing the technical framework and support network that enables the GRCA to accomplish its strategic vision.

The Manager of this department is Murray Lister.

Department of Strategic Communications and Environmental Education

Strategic Communications is a strategic management function that incorporates several activities to support the GRCA's goals and objectives, build trust, and strengthen relationships inside and outside the organization. At the GRCA, this function is part of the leadership team and provides strategic communications counsel and support across the organization.

For about 50 years, the GRCA has connected children and adults with nature through its Outdoor Environmental Education program. This program provides people of all ages with the valuable opportunity to actively engage with the local environment of the Grand River watershed, fostering an important appreciation for the environment and the Grand River watershed.

The Manager of this department is Lisa Stocco.

Department of Central Services

The Central Services department provides technical and operational support to various GRCA program areas. Central Services has four groups: Construction & Maintenance, Motor Pool, Forestry Operations, and Arboriculture. Physical resources and staff are shared between the various groups as necessary to meet seasonal priorities.

The Manager of this department is Brandon Heyer.

Department of Conservation Area Operations

The GRCA manages the oldest and one of the largest networks of conservation areas in the province. The 11 fee-for-use conservation areas and the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area are collectively called Grand River Conservation Areas. These conservation areas provide various recreational opportunities such as camping, hiking, swimming, fishing and picnicking. The GRCA's conservation areas are vital parts of the recreational infrastructure in their communities, providing locations for a wide range of events and activities.

The Manager of this department is Pam Walther-Mabee.

Departments that report to the CAO:

Department of Conservation Lands

One of the GRCA's most significant assets is its land holdings. The GRCA owns about 19,400 hectares (48,000) acres of land in 430 parcels, representing about 2.8 percent of the entire

land area in the watershed. The Conservation Lands Department has a leading role in purchasing, selling, and managing much of this property. Also included in this department is the Natural Heritage Program, which consists of activities associated with providing service and/ or assistance to private and public landowners and community groups on sound environmental practices that will enhance, restore or protect the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. The program includes watershed-scale assessments and the implementation and assessment of restoration activities on GRCA land.

The Manager of this department is Joel Doherty.

Department of Water Infrastructure

The Department of Water Infrastructure coordinates the planning and implementation of construction and maintenance projects related to dams, dikes and the gauge monitoring network owned and operated by GRCA. This department is also responsible for overseeing the delivery of the public safety and emergency preparedness plans for GRCA dams and dikes. In addition, this department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the infrastructure related to GRCA's hydro-generation program.

The manager of this department also assumes the role of, or provides support to, the Flood Management Coordinator.

The Manager of this department is Katelyn Lynch.

Department of Flood Operations

This department coordinates GRCA's technical programs related to Natural Hazards Management and is responsible for the Flood Forecasting and Warning program. The GRCA maintains an extensive flood forecasting and warning system that monitors river and weather conditions 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This includes gauges and monitoring stations located throughout the watershed and maintains a flood forecasting computer model that can be used to forecast the timing and location of floodwaters when a flood is imminent or occurring. This department also leads projects for developing, implementing and maintaining GRCA's natural hazard mapping and provides technical input into the planning and regulatory program.

The manager of this department also assumes the role of, or provides support to, the Flood Management Coordinator.

The Manager of this department is Vahid Taleban.

Department of Water Resources

This department has several program areas related to water quality management. It is responsible for monitoring, understanding, and improving the health of the watershed through the work of landowners, municipalities, and other agencies. Staff within this department also help ensure the water can support communities' needs for drinking water and wastewater assimilation. This work is done through administering, coordinating, and managing water quality, source water protection, hydrogeology, and conservation outreach programs.

The Manager of this department is Janet Ivey.

Department of Planning and Regulations Services

The Planning and Regulations Services department is responsible for the administration of the programs and services related to the implementation of Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act- permitting and compliance, as well as GRCA's role in planning that is identified in Ontario Regulation 686/21- Mandatory Programs and Services.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

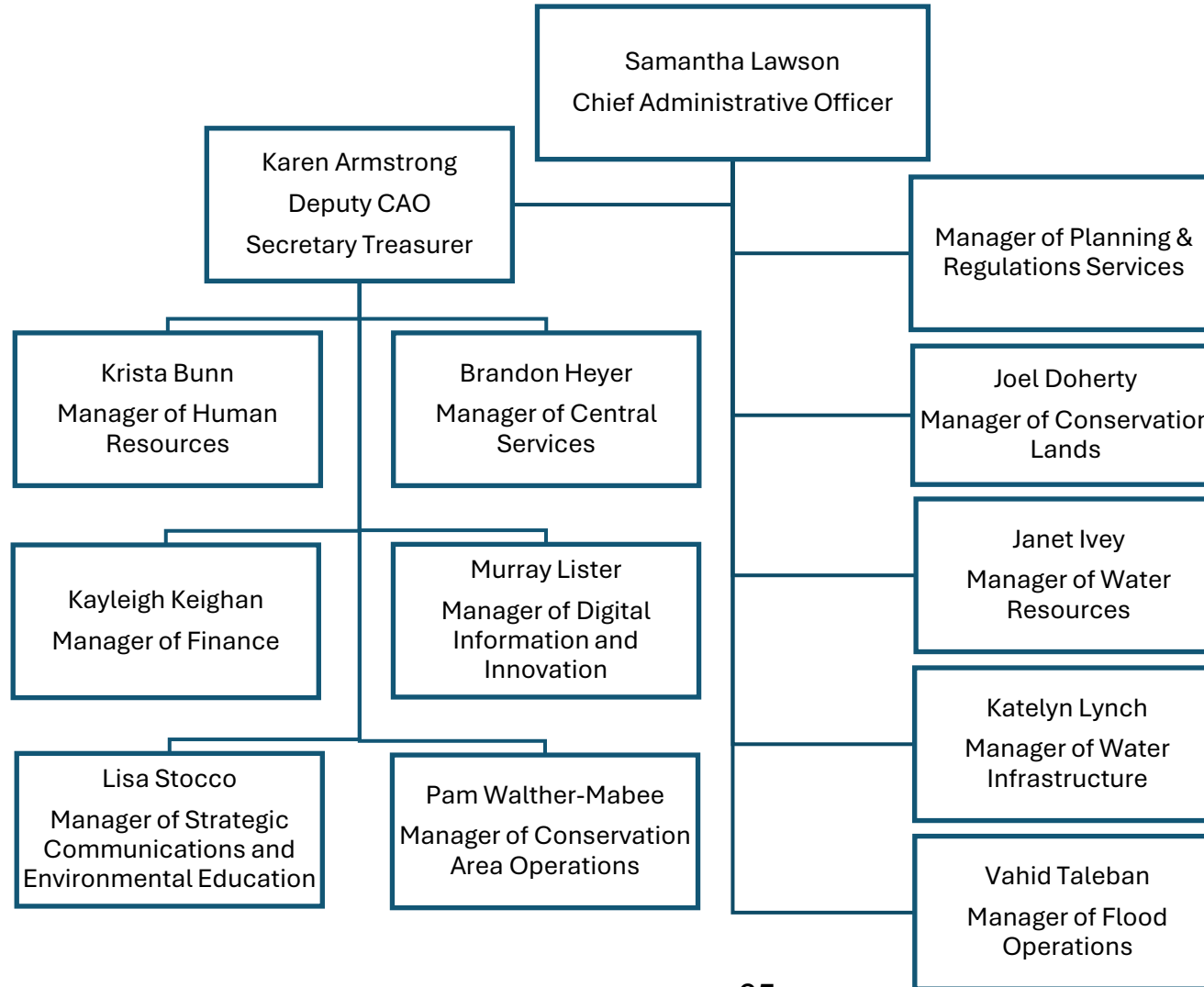
Other Department Considerations:

Not Applicable.

Submitted by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Management Committee



Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-25

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Financial Summary for the Period Ending February 28, 2025

Recommendation:

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending February 28, 2025 be approved.

Summary:

The Financial Statements include the 2025 *actual* year-to-date income and expenditures. The budget approved at the February 28, 2025 General Meeting is included in the *Budget* column. The *Current Forecast* column indicates an estimate of income and expenditures to the end of the current fiscal year. Currently, a net surplus of NIL at year-end is anticipated.

Report:

The Financial Statements for the period ending February 28, 2025 are attached.

Financial Implications:

The activity summarized will result in a NIL net result as at December 31, 2025.

Other Department Considerations:

The management committee and appropriate supervisory staff receive monthly financial reports and advise the finance department of applicable forecast adjustments.

Prepared by:

Eric Lalonde
Financial Controller

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

Category			Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
<u>REVENUE</u>									
<u>Municipal</u>									
Municipal Apportionment	Category 1	various	12,275,000	12,274,999	12,705,000	-	12,705,000	12,705,000	-
Memorandums of Understanding Apportionment	Category 2	various	1,017,000	1,017,000	1,052,000	-	1,052,000	1,052,000	-
Other	Category 2 & 3	8	940,000	728,463	946,000	825,087	946,000	946,000	-
Total Municipal			14,232,000	14,020,462	14,703,000	825,087	14,703,000	14,703,000	-
<u>Government Grants</u>									
MNRF Transfer Payments	Category 1	various	449,688	449,688	449,688	-	449,688	449,688	-
Source Protection Program-Provincial	Category 1	6	834,000	820,925	780,000	75,878	780,000	780,000	-
Other Provincial	Category 1	various	737,500	1,406,061	1,487,500	812,871	1,487,500	1,487,500	-
Other Provincial	Category 2	8	130,000	121,275	220,000	170,014	220,000	220,000	-
Other Provincial	Category 3	10	100,000	29,768	40,000	41,641	40,000	40,000	-
Federal	Category 1,2,3	various	155,000	309,678	208,000	77,234	208,000	208,000	-
Total Government Grants			2,406,188	3,137,395	3,185,188	1,177,638	3,185,188	3,185,188	-
<u>Self Generated</u>									
User Fees and Sales									
<i>Resource Planning</i>	Category 1	4	994,000	911,842	924,000	339,003	924,000	924,000	-
<i>Burford Operations & Planting Services</i>	Category 3	9	680,000	787,732	705,000	254,881	705,000	705,000	-
<i>Conservation Lands Income</i>	Category 3	14	71,000	21,826	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Conservation Lands Income</i>	Category 1	5	15,000	197,946	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-
<i>Conservation Areas User Fees</i>	Category 3	14	10,700,000	12,459,228	11,400,000	124,152	11,400,000	11,400,000	-
<i>Environmental Education</i>	Category 3	11	600,000	609,969	600,000	235,590	600,000	600,000	-
Property Rentals	Category 3	12	3,038,000	3,122,120	3,150,000	1,119,427	3,150,000	3,150,000	-
Hydro Generation	Category 3	13	580,000	612,640	475,000	-	475,000	475,000	-
Land Sales	Category 1	5	-	1,745,835	-	-	-	-	-
Grand River Conservation Foundation	Category 1,2,3	various	662,000	1,568,930	197,000	-	197,000	197,000	-
Donations	Category 1,2,3	various	-	26,070	15,000	35,901	15,000	15,000	-
Investment Income	General Operating	7	2,200,000	2,597,296	2,300,000	63,613	2,300,000	2,300,000	-
Miscellaneous Income	various	various	-	108,586	71,000	450	71,000	71,000	-
Total Self-Generated Revenue			19,540,000	24,770,020	19,852,000	2,173,017	19,852,000	19,852,000	-
TOTAL REVENUE			36,178,188	41,927,877	37,740,188	4,175,742	37,740,188	37,740,188	-

**GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
for the period Ending February 28, 2025**

Category			Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
EXPENSES									
OPERATING									
Watershed Management	Category 1	1	1,146,100	908,054	864,100	170,201	864,100	864,100	-
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Category 1	2	911,000	1,030,941	1,116,000	117,667	1,116,000	1,116,000	-
Water Control Structures	Category 1	3	2,128,700	2,308,745	2,490,700	199,651	2,490,700	2,490,700	-
Resource Planning	Category 1	4	2,679,600	2,580,544	2,747,600	337,322	2,747,600	2,747,600	-
Conservation Lands Management	Category 1	5	2,871,900	2,567,190	3,020,900	257,379	3,020,900	3,020,900	-
Source Protection Program	Category 1	6	834,000	820,925	780,000	75,878	780,000	780,000	-
General Operating Expenses	General Operating	7	4,267,714	3,749,114	4,314,465	573,563	4,314,465	4,314,465	-
Watershed Services	Category 2	8	1,068,000	1,010,976	1,102,000	132,459	1,102,000	1,102,000	-
Burford Operations & Planting Services	Category 3	9	992,900	1,007,151	977,400	67,924	977,400	977,400	-
Conservation Services	Category 3	10	82,200	11,800	86,200	1,179	86,200	86,200	-
Environmental Education	Category 3	11	912,000	933,061	953,000	105,148	953,000	953,000	-
Property Rentals	Category 3	12	1,109,200	1,074,696	1,109,700	54,121	1,109,700	1,109,700	-
Hydro Production	Category 3	13	95,500	139,970	95,500	10,891	95,500	95,500	-
Conservation Areas	Category 3	14	9,782,000	10,163,820	10,540,000	449,873	10,540,000	10,540,000	-
Administrative Support	Category 3	15	1,217,400	1,079,629	1,293,900	78,434	1,293,900	1,293,900	-
Total Operating Expenses			30,098,214	29,386,616	31,491,465	2,631,690	31,491,465	31,491,465	-
MAJOR MAINTENANCE & EQUIPMENT									
Watershed Management	Category 1	1	110,000	7,475	110,000	-	110,000	110,000	-
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Category 1	2	190,000	88,056	190,000	2,100	190,000	190,000	-
Water Control Structures	Category 1	3	1,500,000	3,104,861	3,000,000	823,850	3,000,000	3,000,000	-
Conservation Areas	Category 3	14	2,000,000	2,193,994	2,000,000	-	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
Information Systems	General Operating	16	459,000	435,756	429,000	375,051	429,000	429,000	-
Motor Pool	General Operating	16	415,000	434,770	324,000	142,300	324,000	324,000	-
Total Major Maintenance & Equipment Expenses			4,674,000	6,264,912	6,053,000	1,343,301	6,053,000	6,053,000	-
SPECIAL PROJECTS									
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Category 1	2	250,000	17,445	250,000	6,612	250,000	250,000	-
Conservation Lands Management	Category 1	5	100,000	57,050	100,000	922	100,000	100,000	-
Watershed Services	Category 2	8	1,165,000	1,001,230	1,324,000	195,776	1,324,000	1,324,000	-
Conservation Services	Category 3	10	115,000	132,620	95,000	5,250	95,000	95,000	-
Environmental Education	Category 3	11	500,000	1,669,934	650,000	306	650,000	650,000	-
Total Special Project Expenses			2,130,000	2,878,279	2,419,000	208,866	2,419,000	2,419,000	-
TOTAL EXPENSES			36,902,214	38,529,807	39,963,465	4,183,857	39,963,465	39,963,465	-
Gross Surplus/(Deficit)			(724,026)	3,398,070	(2,223,277)	(8,115)	(2,223,277)	(2,223,277)	-
Prior Year Surplus Carryforward			537,526	537,526	498,777	498,777	498,777	498,777	-
Net Funding FROM/(TO) Reserves			186,500	(3,436,819)	1,724,500	517,351	1,724,500	1,724,500	-
NET SURPLUS			-	498,777	-	1,008,013	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #1 - Watershed Management
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	884,000	769,079	714,000	163,626	714,000	714,000	-
Administration Expenses	197,000	111,305	111,000	1,487	111,000	111,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	65,100	27,670	39,100	5,088	39,100	39,100	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	1,146,100	908,054	864,100	170,201	864,100	864,100	-
Instrumentation	60,000	7,475	60,000	-	60,000	60,000	-
Water Quality Monitoring Equipment	50,000	-	50,000	-	50,000	50,000	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures	110,000	7,475	110,000	-	110,000	110,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	1,256,100	915,529	974,100	170,201	974,100	974,100	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Municipal							
Municipal Apportionment (levy)	1,143,600	1,137,600	861,600	-	861,600	861,600	-
Government Grants							
Other Provincial	37,500	-	37,500	49,024	37,500	37,500	-
Funding From Reserves							
Gauges	75,000	-	75,000	-	75,000	75,000	-
TOTAL FUNDING	1,256,100	1,137,600	974,100	49,024	974,100	974,100	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	222,071	-	(121,177)	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #2 - Flood Forecasting and Warning
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	567,000	657,894	737,000	97,422	737,000	737,000	-
Administration Expenses	236,000	246,397	256,000	9,450	256,000	256,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	108,000	126,650	123,000	10,795	123,000	123,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	911,000	1,030,941	1,116,000	117,667	1,116,000	1,116,000	-
Hardware	88,000	76,648	88,000	2,077	88,000	88,000	-
Stream Gauges	102,000	11,408	102,000	23	102,000	102,000	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures	190,000	88,056	190,000	2,100	190,000	190,000	-
Floodplain Mapping Projects	250,000	17,445	250,000	6,612	250,000	250,000	-
Total SPECIAL PROJECT Expenditures	250,000	17,445	250,000	6,612	250,000	250,000	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	-	75,000	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	1,351,000	1,211,442	1,556,000	126,379	1,556,000	1,556,000	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Municipal							
Municipal Apportionment (levy)	911,662	911,662	1,116,662	-	1,116,662	1,116,662	-
Government Grants							
MNR Transfer Payments	164,338	164,338	164,338	-	164,338	164,338	-
Other Provincial	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Funding From Reserves							
Floodplain Mapping Projects & Gauges	275,000	17,445	275,000	-	275,000	275,000	-
Water Management Operating	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	1,351,000	1,093,445	1,556,000	-	1,556,000	1,556,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	(117,997)	-	(126,379)	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #3 - Water Control Structures
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
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How much does it cost, and who pays for it?

Expenditures and Funding to Reserves

Compensation and Benefits	1,441,000	1,480,248	1,770,000	167,380	1,770,000	1,770,000	-
Administration Expenses	29,200	52,664	49,200	22,168	49,200	49,200	-
Insurance	143,000	144,749	151,000	-	151,000	151,000	-
Property Taxes	170,700	172,192	175,700	-	175,700	175,700	-
Other Operating Expenses	344,800	458,892	344,800	10,103	344,800	344,800	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	2,128,700	2,308,745	2,490,700	199,651	2,490,700	2,490,700	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures	1,500,000	3,104,861	3,000,000	823,850	3,000,000	3,000,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	3,628,700	5,413,606	5,490,700	1,023,501	5,490,700	5,490,700	-

Funding

Municipal

Municipal Apportionment (levy)	2,593,350	2,599,349	2,785,350	-	2,785,350	2,785,350	-
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Government Grants

MNR Transfer Payments	285,350	285,350	285,350	-	285,350	285,350	-
Provincial	700,000	1,396,600	1,450,000	745,683	1,450,000	1,450,000	-
Federal	-	11,236	-	-	-	-	-

Funding From Reserves

Water Control Structures/Water Mgmt Operating Reserve/Land(AMP)	50,000	-	970,000	-	970,000	970,000	-
Land Sale Proceeds Reserve-AMP	-	190,140	-	-	-	-	-
Land Sale Proceeds Reserve-WECl	-	798,221	-	-	-	-	-

TOTAL REVENUE AND FUNDING FROM RESERVES	3,628,700	5,280,896	5,490,700	745,683	5,490,700	5,490,700	-
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Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	(132,710)	-	(277,818)	-	-	-
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GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #4 - Resource Planning
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	2,403,000	2,062,348	2,435,000	292,657	2,435,000	2,435,000	-
Administration Expenses	221,900	251,364	257,900	20,475	257,900	257,900	-
Other Operating Expenses	54,700	266,832	54,700	24,190	54,700	54,700	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	2,679,600	2,580,544	2,747,600	337,322	2,747,600	2,747,600	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	2,679,600	2,580,544	2,747,600	337,322	2,747,600	2,747,600	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Municipal							
Municipal Apportionment (levy)	1,685,600	1,685,600	1,823,600	-	1,823,600	1,823,600	-
Self Generated							
Solicitor Enquiry Fees	80,000	52,620	70,000	8,670	70,000	70,000	-
Permit Fees	470,000	407,848	410,000	126,430	410,000	410,000	-
Plan Review Fees	444,000	451,374	444,000	203,903	444,000	444,000	-
Funding from Reserves							
Water Management Operating Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	2,679,600	2,597,442	2,747,600	339,003	2,747,600	2,747,600	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	16,898	-	1,681	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

P&S #5 - Conservation Lands Management

for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
Expenditures and Funding to Reserves							
Compensation and Benefits	1,813,000	1,609,002	1,921,000	232,362	1,921,000	1,921,000	-
Administration Expenses	165,100	141,179	168,100	4,821	168,100	168,100	-
Insurance	60,000	61,025	65,000	-	65,000	65,000	-
Property Taxes	305,200	317,722	314,200	942	314,200	314,200	-
Other Operating Expenses	528,600	438,262	552,600	19,254	552,600	552,600	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	2,871,900	2,567,190	3,020,900	257,379	3,020,900	3,020,900	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures							
Land Purchases/Land Sale Expenses	-	10,681	-	922	-	-	-
Ecological Restoration	100,000	46,369	100,000	-	100,000	100,000	-
Total SPECIAL PROJECT Expenditures	100,000	57,050	100,000	922	100,000	100,000	-
Forestry/Master Plans/Transition	-	198,000	-	-	-	-	-
Land Sale Proceeds	-	1,745,835	-	-	-	-	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	-	1,943,835	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO R	2,971,900	4,568,075	3,120,900	258,301	3,120,900	3,120,900	-
Funding							
Municipal							
Municipal Apportionment (levy)	2,629,900	2,629,900	2,778,900	-	2,778,900	2,778,900	-
Municipal Other	-	9,841	-	-	-	-	-
Government Grants							
Provincial	-	9,461	-	18,164	-	-	-
Federal	-	3,146	-	-	-	-	-
Self Generated							
Timber Sales	15,000	197,946	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-
Land Sale Proceeds	-	1,745,835	-	-	-	-	-
Donations - Foundation	127,000	53,617	127,000	-	127,000	127,000	-
Donations - Other	-	11,070	-	-	-	-	-
Funding From Reserves							
Land (Demolitions)	100,000	10,681	100,000	-	100,000	100,000	-
Transition Reserve (Staffing)	100,000	-	100,000	-	100,000	100,000	-
TOTAL REVENUE	2,971,900	4,671,497	3,120,900	18,164	3,120,900	3,120,900	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	103,422	-	(240,137)	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #6 - Source Protection Program
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
Expenditures							
Compensation and Benefits	490,000	551,787	625,000	74,406	625,000	625,000	-
Administration Expenses	50,000	54,634	45,000	99	45,000	45,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	90,000	46,461	50,000	1,373	50,000	50,000	-
Water Budget - Technical Studies	204,000	168,043	60,000	-	60,000	60,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	834,000	820,925	780,000	75,878	780,000	780,000	-
Funding							
Government Grants							
Provincial	834,000	820,925	780,000	75,878	780,000	780,000	-
TOTAL FUNDING	834,000	820,925	780,000	75,878	780,000	780,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #7 General Operating Expense
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	YTD Actual	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	2,441,000	2,296,603	2,490,000	409,036	2,490,000	2,490,000	-
Administration Expenses	460,000	399,840	478,000	47,549	478,000	478,000	-
Insurance	334,500	289,431	298,000	-	298,000	298,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	1,102,214	825,593	1,118,465	116,978	1,118,465	1,118,465	-
LESS: Recovery of Corporate Services Expenses	(70,000)	(62,353)	(70,000)	-	(70,000)	(70,000)	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	4,267,714	3,749,114	4,314,465	573,563	4,314,465	4,314,465	-
Interest Income	2,050,000	2,217,982	2,050,000	-	2,050,000	2,050,000	-
Stabilization Reserve-Category 1/General Operating	-	230,566	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel/Transition/building	-	177,141	-	-	-	-	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	2,050,000	2,625,689	2,050,000	-	2,050,000	2,050,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	6,317,714	6,374,803	6,364,465	573,563	6,364,465	6,364,465	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Municipal							
Municipal Apportionment (levy)	3,310,888	3,310,888	3,338,888	-	3,338,888	3,338,888	-
Self Generated							
Investment Income	2,200,000	2,597,296	2,300,000	63,613	2,300,000	2,300,000	-
Miscellaneous	-	61,482	-	24	-	-	-
Funding From Reserves							
Personnel	65,000	-	65,000	-	65,000	65,000	-
TOTAL REVENUE	5,575,888	5,969,666	5,703,888	63,637	5,703,888	5,703,888	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(741,826)	(405,137)	(660,577)	(509,926)	(660,577)	(660,577)	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #8 - Watershed Services - CAT 2
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	850,000	784,578	850,000	129,463	850,000	850,000	-
Administration Expenses	118,000	112,618	118,000	935	118,000	118,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	100,000	113,780	134,000	2,061	134,000	134,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	1,068,000	1,010,976	1,102,000	132,459	1,102,000	1,102,000	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures							
RWQP Grants	800,000	638,543	800,000	111,479	800,000	800,000	-
Waste Water Optimization Project	130,000	121,275	130,000	-	130,000	130,000	-
Species at Risk	70,000	91,001	70,000	33,027	70,000	70,000	-
Water Management Plan (WQ)	-	-	90,000	12,771	90,000	90,000	-
Nature Smart Climate Solutions	85,000	84,834	138,000	17,359	138,000	138,000	-
Upper Blair Subwatershed Study	80,000	57,077	96,000	1	96,000	96,000	-
Municipal Drain Studies	-	8,500	-	21,139	-	-	-
Total SPECIAL PROJECT Expenditures	1,165,000	1,001,230	1,324,000	195,776	1,324,000	1,324,000	-
Watershed Restoration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stabilization Category 2	-	36,769	-	-	-	-	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	-	36,769	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	2,233,000	2,048,975	2,426,000	328,235	2,426,000	2,426,000	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Municipal							
Memorandums of Understanding Apportionment	1,017,000	1,017,000	1,052,000	-	1,052,000	1,052,000	-
Municipal Other	930,000	709,884	946,000	808,055	946,000	946,000	-
Government Grants							
Other Provincial	130,000	121,275	220,000	170,014	220,000	220,000	-
Federal	85,000	200,816	208,000	77,234	208,000	208,000	-
Self Generated							
Donations - Foundation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donations - Other	-	-	-	35,901	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Funding From Reserves							
Cambridge Desiltation Pond	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	2,163,000	2,048,975	2,426,000	1,091,204	2,426,000	2,426,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(70,000)	-	-	762,969	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #9 Burford Tree Nursery & Planting Services
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	287,000	295,301	306,000	20,452	306,000	306,000	-
Administration Expenses	30,900	14,662	15,400	998	15,400	15,400	-
Other Operating Expenses	675,000	697,188	656,000	46,474	656,000	656,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	992,900	1,007,151	977,400	67,924	977,400	977,400	-
<hr/>							
<u>Funding</u>							
Government Grants							
Federal	-	1,484	-	-	-	-	-
Self Generated							
Burford Nursery	450,000	530,876	475,000	132,497	475,000	475,000	-
Landowner Contributions (Tree Planting)	230,000	256,856	230,000	122,384	230,000	230,000	-
Donations - Foundation	-	3,250	-	-	-	-	-
<hr/>							
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(312,900)	(214,685)	(272,400)	186,957	(272,400)	(272,400)	

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #10 - Conservation Services
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
Expenditures and Funding to Reserves							
Compensation and Benefits	27,000	7,807	28,000	1,179	28,000	28,000	-
Administration Expenses	33,200	3,236	36,200	-	36,200	36,200	-
Other Operating Expenses	22,000	757	22,000	-	22,000	22,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	82,200	11,800	86,200	1,179	86,200	86,200	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures							
Brant/Brantford Water Festival	45,000	38,573	45,000	4,828	45,000	45,000	-
Haldimand Children's Water Festival	-	143	-	21	-	-	-
Waterloo Wellington Children's Water Festival	-	3,163	-	-	-	-	-
Water Management Plan	-	-	10,000	-	10,000	10,000	-
Mill Creek Rangers Program	35,000	39,282	40,000	141	40,000	40,000	-
Profit Mapping	35,000	29,101	-	-	-	-	-
Heritage River Event	-	21,690	-	-	-	-	-
Great Lakes Agricultural Stewardship Initiative	-	668	-	260	-	-	-
Total SPECIAL PROJECT Expenditures	115,000	132,620	95,000	5,250	95,000	95,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	197,200	144,420	181,200	6,429	181,200	181,200	
Funding							
Municipal							
Municipal-Other	10,000	8,326	-	16,500	-	-	-
Government Grants							
Other Provincial	100,000	29,768	40,000	41,641	40,000	40,000	-
Federal	70,000	9,928	-	-	-	-	-
Self Generated							
Donations - Foundation	35,000	66,435	70,000	-	70,000	70,000	-
Donations - Other	-	15,000	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-
Funding from Reserves							
Transition Reserve/Cambridge Desiltation/Transition	-	3,920	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	215,000	133,377	125,000	58,141	125,000	125,000	
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	17,800	(11,043)	(56,200)	51,712	(56,200)	(56,200)	

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #11 - Outdoor Environmental Education
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation & Benefits	642,000	624,179	672,000	79,444	672,000	672,000	-
Administration Expenses	57,000	61,113	68,000	2,771	68,000	68,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	213,000	247,769	213,000	22,933	213,000	213,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	912,000	933,061	953,000	105,148	953,000	953,000	-
Guelph Lake Nature Centre	500,000	1,669,934	650,000	306	650,000	650,000	-
Total SPECIAL PROJECT Expenditures	500,000	1,669,934	650,000	306	650,000	650,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	1,412,000	2,602,995	1,603,000	105,454	1,603,000	1,603,000	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Municipal							
Municipal-Other	-	412	-	532	-	-	-
Self Generated							
Donations - Foundation	500,000	1,429,408	-	-	-	-	-
Donations - Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nature Centre Revenue - Schools	600,000	608,283	600,000	235,590	600,000	600,000	-
Nature Centre Revenue - Community	-	1,686	-	-	-	-	-
Nature Centre Revenue - Day Camp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Funding from Reserves							
Transition Reserve	312,000	301,999	353,000	-	353,000	353,000	-
Nature Centre Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Capital Reserve/Land Sales Proceeds	-	261,207	650,000	-	650,000	650,000	-
TOTAL REVENUE	1,412,000	2,602,995	1,603,000	236,122	1,603,000	1,603,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	-	130,668	-	-	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #12 - Property Rentals
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	470,000	365,223	473,000	46,614	473,000	473,000	-
Administration Expenses	37,500	52,909	35,000	3,873	35,000	35,000	-
Property Taxes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Operating Expenses	601,700	656,564	601,700	3,634	601,700	601,700	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	1,109,200	1,074,696	1,109,700	54,121	1,109,700	1,109,700	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	1,109,200	1,074,696	1,109,700	54,121	1,109,700	1,109,700	-
<u>Funding</u>							
Self Generated							
Belwood	1,066,000	1,063,904	1,087,000	495,357	1,087,000	1,087,000	-
Conestogo	1,276,000	1,280,457	1,302,000	538,866	1,302,000	1,302,000	-
Agricultural	250,000	267,175	270,000	17,467	270,000	270,000	-
Residential	110,000	115,535	115,000	67,737	115,000	115,000	-
Miscellaneous	336,000	395,049	376,000	-	376,000	376,000	-
Funding FROM Reserves							
Cottage Lot Program	-	16,000	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	3,038,000	3,138,120	3,150,000	1,119,427	3,150,000	3,150,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	1,928,800	2,063,424	2,040,300	1,065,306	2,040,300	2,040,300	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #13 - Hydro Production
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures and Funding to Reserves</u>							
Compensation and Benefits	70,000	69,123	70,000	9,852	70,000	70,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	25,500	70,847	25,500	1,039	25,500	25,500	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	95,500	139,970	95,500	10,891	95,500	95,500	-
General Capital/Land Sale Proceeds	116,500	105,000	66,500	-	66,500	66,500	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	116,500	105,000	66,500	-	66,500	66,500	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	212,000	244,970	162,000	10,891	162,000	162,000	-
<u>Revenue</u>							
Self Generated							
Hydro Production-Belwood	265,000	318,225	315,000	-	315,000	315,000	-
Hydro Production-Conestogo	260,000	254,408	105,000	-	105,000	105,000	-
Hydro Production-Guelph	40,000	32,180	40,000	-	40,000	40,000	-
Hydro Production-Elora	15,000	7,827	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-
TOTAL REVENUE	580,000	612,640	475,000	-	475,000	475,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	368,000	367,670	313,000	(10,891)	313,000	313,000	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #14 - Conservation Areas
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
Expenditures and Funding to Reserves							
Compensation and Benefits	5,774,000	5,741,875	6,117,000	336,851	6,117,000	6,117,000	-
Administration Expenses	220,000	229,988	253,000	8,420	253,000	253,000	-
Property Tax	65,000	64,964	65,000	-	65,000	65,000	-
Other Operating Expenses	3,723,000	4,126,993	4,105,000	104,602	4,105,000	4,105,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	9,782,000	10,163,820	10,540,000	449,873	10,540,000	10,540,000	-
Total CAPITAL Expenditures	2,000,000	2,193,994	2,000,000	-	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
Conservation Area Reserve	-	838,000	-	-	-	-	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	-	838,000	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES AND FUNDING TO RESERVES	11,782,000	13,195,814	12,540,000	449,873	12,540,000	12,540,000	-
Funding							
Government Grants							
Federal	-	83,068	-	-	-	-	-
Self Generated							
Brant	1,175,000	1,451,206	1,300,000	8,677	1,300,000	1,300,000	-
Byng Island	1,100,000	1,159,760	1,050,000	5,482	1,050,000	1,050,000	-
Belwood Lake	375,000	408,290	375,000	2,577	375,000	375,000	-
Conestogo Lake	600,000	637,636	600,000	3,576	600,000	600,000	-
Elora Gorge	2,300,000	2,549,436	2,400,000	15,813	2,400,000	2,400,000	-
Elora Quarry	450,000	402,111	350,000	-	350,000	350,000	-
Guelph Lake	1,400,000	1,755,109	1,650,000	20,394	1,650,000	1,650,000	-
Laurel Creek	650,000	780,535	700,000	10,896	700,000	700,000	-
Pinehurst Lake	900,000	1,075,238	975,000	11,720	975,000	975,000	-
Rockwood	1,300,000	1,646,290	1,475,000	24,920	1,475,000	1,475,000	-
Shade's Mills	450,000	593,617	525,000	20,097	525,000	525,000	-
Total Fee Revenue	10,700,000	12,459,228	11,400,000	124,152	11,400,000	11,400,000	-
Donations-Foundation	-	16,220	-	-	-	-	-
Donations - Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Areas Income	71,000	21,826	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	42,682	71,000	426	71,000	71,000	-
Funding From Reserves							
Gravel	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conservation Areas - Capital Projects	500,000	-	500,000	-	500,000	500,000	-
TOTAL REVENUE	11,272,000	12,623,024	11,971,000	124,578	11,971,000	11,971,000	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(510,000)	(572,790)	(569,000)	(325,295)	(569,000)	(569,000)	-

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
P&S #15 - Administrative Support - CATEGORY 3
 for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
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How much does it cost, and who pays for it?

Expenditures and Funding to Reserves

Compensation and Benefits	668,000	584,400	706,000	77,194	706,000	706,000	-
Administration Expenses	100,900	117,122	139,400	78	139,400	139,400	-
Insurance	208,500	207,894	208,500	1,162	208,500	208,500	-
Other Operating Expenses	240,000	170,213	240,000	-	240,000	240,000	-
LESS: Recovery of Corporate Services Expenses							
Total OPERATING Expenditures	1,217,400	1,079,629	1,293,900	78,434	1,293,900	1,293,900	-
Stabilization Category 3	-	282,665	-	-	-	-	-
Total FUNDING to RESERVES	-	282,665	-	-	-	-	-

Funding

Self Generated

Miscellaneous	-	4,422	-	-	-	-	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(1,217,400)	(1,357,872)	(1,293,900)	(78,434)	(1,293,900)	(1,293,900)	

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Supplementary Information - Information Systems and Motor Pool
for the period Ending February 28, 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
How much does it cost, and who pays for it?							
<u>Expenditures</u>							
Information Systems							
Compensation and Benefits	1,329,000	1,176,446	1,394,000	198,759	1,394,000	1,394,000	-
Administrative Expenses	25,500	16,589	25,500	1,649	25,500	25,500	-
Software and Hardware Maintenance	187,500	198,824	187,500	120,917	187,500	187,500	-
Supplies and Services	54,000	47,233	54,000	7,294	54,000	54,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	1,596,000	1,439,092	1,661,000	328,619	1,661,000	1,661,000	-
Capital Expenses	300,000	385,964	300,000	46,432	300,000	300,000	-
LESS Internal Charges	(1,437,000)	(1,389,300)	(1,532,000)	-	(1,532,000)	(1,532,000)	-
NET Unallocated Expenses	459,000	435,756	429,000	375,051	429,000	429,000	-
Motor Pool							
Compensation and Benefits	321,000	296,321	330,000	36,840	330,000	330,000	-
Administrative Expenses	26,000	17,787	26,000	100	26,000	26,000	-
Insurance	63,000	66,805	63,000	-	63,000	63,000	-
Motor Pool Building and Grounds Maintenance	10,000	12,716	10,000	404	10,000	10,000	-
Equipment, Repairs and Supplies	336,000	454,908	336,000	72,533	336,000	336,000	-
Fuel	284,000	274,004	284,000	24,416	284,000	284,000	-
Total OPERATING Expenditures	1,040,000	1,122,541	1,049,000	134,293	1,049,000	1,049,000	-
Capital Expenses	675,000	748,745	675,000	8,007	675,000	675,000	-
LESS Internal Charges	(1,300,000)	(1,436,516)	(1,400,000)	-	(1,400,000)	(1,400,000)	-
NET Unallocated Expenses	415,000	434,770	324,000	142,300	324,000	324,000	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	874,000	870,526	753,000	517,351	753,000	753,000	-
Gross Surplus (Deficit)	(874,000)	(870,526)	(753,000)	(517,351)	(753,000)	(753,000)	-
Funding From Reserves	3,611,000	3,696,342	3,685,000	517,351	3,685,000	3,685,000	-
Funding to Reserves	(2,737,000)	(2,825,816)	(2,932,000)	-	(2,932,000)	(2,932,000)	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-24

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Cash and Investment Status – February 2025

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-24– Cash and Investment Status – February 2025 be received as information.

Summary:

The cash and investment position of the Grand River Conservation Authority as of February 28, 2025, was \$60,171,399 with outstanding cheques written in the amount of \$47,812.

Report:

See attached.

Financial Implications

Interest rates, etc. are shown on the report.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Prepared by:

Racha Ibrahim
Senior Accountant

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO/Secretary Treasurer

**Grand River Conservation Authority
Cash and Investments Status Report
February 28, 2025**

BANK ACCOUNTS	Location	Type	Amount	Interest Rate
	CIBC	Current Account	9,878,974	3.63%
	RBC	Current Account	35,557	nil
	Wood Gundy	Current Account	0	nil
	CIBC - SPP Holding	Current Account	343,833	3.63%
	TOTAL CASH - CURRENT ACCOUNT		10,258,364	

INVESTMENT	Date Invested	Location	Type	Amount	Face Value Interest Rate	Yield Rate	Date of Maturity
		CIBC Renaissance	High Interest Savings Account	3,326,638	3.05%	3.05%	not applicable
		CIBC High Interest	High Interest Savings Account	2,358,401	3.05%	3.05%	not applicable
		One Investment Savings	High Interest Savings Account	4,927,996	3.95%	3.95%	not applicable
	September 23, 2021	Province of Ontario	Bond	2,300,000	1.23%	1.23%	December 2, 2026
	September 23, 2021	ManuLife Financial	Bond	2,000,000	2.24%	1.34%	May 12, 2030; call date 2025
	December 14, 2022	CIBC	Bond	4,100,000	3.30%	4.36%	May 26, 2025
	December 7, 2023	National Bank	Non-Redeemable GIC	2,000,000	4.70%	4.70%	December 7, 2026
	December 21, 2023	CIBC Trust Corp	Non-Redeemable GIC	2,000,000	4.45%	4.45%	December 22, 2025
	March 6, 2024	Laurentian Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	5.20%	5.20%	March 6, 2025
	March 6, 2024	National Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	5.00%	5.00%	March 6, 2025
	March 6, 2024	HSBC Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	4.80%	4.80%	March 6, 2026
	March 6, 2024	National Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	4.70%	4.70%	March 6, 2026
	June 27, 2024	CIBC	GTD Investment Certificate	4,000,000	4.80%	4.80%	June 30, 2025
	June 27, 2024	Laurentian Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	3,200,000	4.43%	4.43%	June 28, 2027
	September 5, 2024	Manulife Trust Co	GTD Investment Certificate	3,000,000	3.81%	3.81%	September 7, 2027
	September 5, 2024	Manulife Trust Co	GTD Investment Certificate	3,500,000	3.81%	3.81%	September 7, 2027
	September 10, 2024	National Trust Company	GTD Investment Certificate	2,100,000	3.75%	3.75%	September 11, 2026
	September 10, 2024	Montreal Trust Company	GTD Investment Certificate	2,100,000	3.75%	3.75%	September 11, 2026
	October 23, 2024	CIBC Mortgages Inc.	GTD Investment Certificate	3,000,000	3.60%	3.60%	October 24, 2025
	October 23, 2024	CIBC Trust Corp	Non-Redeemable GIC	2,000,000	3.60%	3.60%	October 24, 2025
		TOTAL INVESTMENTS		49,913,035			

TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS **\$60,171,399**

* Reserve Balance at December 31st, 2024 56,115,292

Investment By Institution

	<u>% of Total Portfol</u>
C.I.B.C.	42%
Montreal Trust Company	4%
Manulife Trust Co	13%
ManuLife Financial	4%
One Investment Program	10%
Province of Ontario	5%
Laurentian Bank of Canada	8%
National Bank of Canada	8%
HSBC Bank of Canada	2%
National Trust Company	4%
	<u>100%</u>

* Reserve balances are reviewed annually by the Board in November.

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-27

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: 2025 Road Site Preparation and Surface Treatment Tender

Recommendation:

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the 2025 road site preparation and surface treatment to Cornell Construction Limited of Brantford, Ontario up to the amount of \$753,047.50.00 excluding HST.

Summary:

Not applicable

Report:

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) constructs and maintains approximately 146 kilometers of paved roadways and 11.6 hectares of paved parking lots. Park roads and cottage lot roads are heavily used during the operating season and it is necessary to ensure that these roads are maintained to provide safe driving surfaces for GRCA patrons.

GRCA roads are maintained to provide an appropriate driving surface in keeping with the nature of the areas that the roads serve. Each year deteriorated portions of roadway are built up, leveled, and compacted. This work is completed using either in-house resources or through the use of external contractors. Build-up and surface treatment for Conservation Area and Cottage Lot Roads is included in this tender. Once the road base has been prepared the road is resurfaced using a combination of emulsified asphalt and aggregate to form a paved surface. Application of this surfacing material requires specialized equipment and there are very few companies that specialize in this type of work.

The tender for the 2025 road site preparation and surface treatments was publicly advertised on the Biddingo electronic procurement website on February 11, 2025. Two bids were received. The tender submission was opened at 1:00 p.m. on February 26, 2025 with an opening committee consisting of Sonja Radoja, former Manager of Corporate Services, Kayleigh Keighan, Manager of Finance, and Paul Lucier, Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations. The tender submission was opened in the presence of the opening committee while sharing the screen through Microsoft Teams. The results of the tender process are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Tender Results

Company	Tender Amount (excluding HST)
Cornell Construction	\$753,047.50
Terry Hewitson Enterprises	\$820,451.30

The bid from Cornell Construction Limited meets the requirements outlined in the tender package. This company has successfully completed the annual road surface treatment contract for the GRCA since 2015.

It is anticipated that approximately 17,915 sq.m. of recycled asphalt base and 14,885 sq.m. of double surface treatment will be required at the Belwood Lake and Conestogo Lake cottage lot

roads. It is anticipated that approximately 16,770 sq.m of recycled asphalt base and 13,595 sq.m. of double surface treatment will be required at the Conservation Area roads. These quantities represent an approximate 11% increase from the work completed in 2024.

Financial Implications:

Funding for road resurfacing is included in both the Conservation Area Capital and Conservation Lands (Cottage Lot) budgets and reserves as necessary. The amount tendered by Cornell Construction Limited is within the amount budgeted for this purpose.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable

Prepared by:

Paul Lucier
Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations

Brandon Heyer
Manager of Central Services

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO, Secretary-Treasurer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-28

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: 2025 Replacement Vehicle Purchase

Recommendation:

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Ford Transit 1 Ton Medium Roof Cargo Van for a total amount of \$69,227.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Ford Transit ½ Ton Low Roof Cargo Van at a total amount of \$67,263.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Chevrolet Silverado ½ Ton 4WD Pickup at a total amount of \$50,264.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Finch Chevrolet Cadillac Buick GMC Ltd.;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2025 Dodge Ram Medium Duty 5500 Series Cab and Chassis at a total amount of \$91,702.00 (excluding HST & Licensing) from Blue Mountain Chrysler Ltd.

Summary:

Not applicable

Report:

The 2025 Motor Pool budget includes the purchase of four vehicles to replace four existing vehicles. In order to obtain the best value for the GRCA while meeting the specific operational needs of these vehicles, the GRCA Human Resource policies allow for a public Request For Quotation (RFQ) procurement approach.

The goal of the RFQ procurement approach is to ensure the best value for the GRCA over the life of vehicles, reduce downtime for vehicle service, and ensure the GRCA operational needs of the equipment are met. Vehicle specifications were developed based on the ideal performance requirements to reflect the operational needs of the area and serviceability of the vehicle. Due to the variability of features that any given vehicle could have, pre-determined weighted evaluation criteria are established to evaluate submissions, and these are shared with potential bidders. Bidders can submit a quote for vehicles that may or may not meet all of the ideal performance requirements and a portion of the subsequent evaluation is to compare different types of vehicles. After assigning a score to each portion of the weighted criteria, the bidder with the highest total score is recommended as the preferred option and this may or may not result in selecting the lowest bid price.

As part of the Request for Quotations (RFQ). The 2025 RFQ for Replacement Vehicles was publicly advertised on February 6, 2025 on the Biddingo electronic procurement website. Three bid packages were received by the closing date of March 4, 2025. As described in the RFQ, bid packages were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 10% Location of Parts and Service Facility
- 10% Past Experience with the Manufacturer
- 40% Conformance to the Specification
- 40% Price Quotation

Bids were reviewed by Kayleigh Keighan, Manager of Finance, Brandon Heyer, Manager of Central Services, Paul Lucier, Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations, Jamie Eaton, Fleet Coordinator. Bids and ranking based on evaluation scores have been summarized below:

2025, 1 Ton Medium Roof Cargo Van, Single Rear Wheel, AWD, 3759mm (148") Wheelbase – One (1) Required

Dealer	Make/Model	Bid Amount (HST excluded)	Ranking based on score
Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.	Ford Transit 350 Medium Roof Cargo Van	\$69,227.00	1
Blue Mountain Chrysler Ltd.	Promaster 2500 High Roof Cargo Van	\$65,819.00	2

2025, ½ Ton Low Roof Cargo Van, Single Rear Wheel, AWD, 3300mm (129.9") Wheelbase – One (1) Required

Dealer	Make/Model	Bid Amount (HST excluded)	Ranking based on score
Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.	Ford Transit 150 Low Roof Cargo Van	\$67,263.00	1
Blue Mountain Chrysler Ltd.	Promaster 2500 High Roof Cargo Van	\$66,039.00	2

2025, ½ Ton Pickup Truck, Super Cab, 4WD, 3746.5mm (147.5") Wheelbase – one (1) Required

Dealer	Make/Model	Bid Amount (HST excluded)	Ranking based on score
Finch Chevrolet Cadillac Buick GMC Ltd.	Chevrolet 1500 Super cab Pickup	\$50,264.00	1
Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.	Ford F150 Super Cab Pickup	\$57,073.00	2
Blue Mountain Chrysler Ltd.	Ram 1500 Crew Cab Pickup	\$69,543.00	3

2025, Medium Duty, 5500 Series Crew Cab and Chassis, Dual Rear Wheel, 4WD, 5,014mm (197.4") Wheelbase – One (1) Required

Dealer	Make/Model	Bid Amount (HST excluded)	Ranking based on score
Blue Mountain Chrysler Ltd.	Ram, 5500 Crew Cab & Chassis 4WD	\$91,702.00	1
Parkway Ford Sales Ltd.	Ford F550 Crew Cab & Chassis 4WD	\$88,595.00	2

As part of the ½ ton pickup truck RFQ, an alternate bid was requested to compare gasoline engine/electric hybrids with gasoline engine trucks. No bids were received for the hybrid alternate option.

Financial Implications:

The total combined amount of \$278,456.00 excluding HST & Licensing is included in the 2025 Motor Pool budget and will be funded from the Motor Pool Reserve. The units being replaced will be disposed through public auction and any proceeds from that sale will be allocated to the Motor Pool Reserve.

Other Department Considerations:

Staff in several GRCA departments were consulted in the preparation of the specifications to ensure the replacement trucks accommodate the various specific uses.

Prepared by:

Paul Lucier
Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations

Brandon Heyer
Manager of Central Services

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-29

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Administration Centre Complex Cleaning Services RFP Results

Recommendation:

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority retain Corporate Mirror Inc. / Cleaning Masters Canada to provide cleaning services at the Administration Centre Complex for \$152,083.00 excluding HST over a term of three years.

Summary:

Not applicable

Report:

In 2022, SQM Janitorial Services Inc. was retained through a public Request for Proposal (RFP) for cleaning services at the administration buildings for a term of three years. This three year contract with SQM Janitorial Services Inc. will expire in April 2025.

On February 12, 2025 the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) issued a public RFP for cleaning services for a term of three years. The RFP was advertised on the Biddingo electronic procurement website with a close date of February 26, 2025. Proposal submissions were opened at 1:00 p.m. on February 26, 2025 with an opening committee consisting of Sonja Radoja, former Manager of Corporate Services, Kayleigh Keighan, Manager of Finance, and Paul Lucier, Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations. Proposal submissions were opened in the presence of the opening committee while sharing the screen through Microsoft Teams.

Eight proposals were received by the closing date and evaluated based on the following criteria and weighting which was documented in the RFP:

- Relevant Company Experience – 15%
- Supervisor Qualifications – 10%
- Cleaning Products Proposed – 10%
- References (incl. past GRCA experience with the Proponent) – 25%
- Fees (weighted as a percentage of lowest fee proposal) – 40%

Corporate Mirror Inc. / Cleaning Masters Canada had the highest scoring proposal and the lowest bid price as summarized in the table below.

	Ranking based on total RFP score
Corporate Mirror Inc. / Cleaning Masters Canada	1
Elite Facilities Group	2
SQM Janitorial Services Inc.	3
Bee-Clean Building Maintenance	4
Service Master of Guelph	5
Intergroup Facility Services Inc.	6
GBC Facility Services	7

An eighth proposal was received; however, it did not meet the requirements outlined in the RFP and therefore was rejected and not evaluated.

Financial Implications:

The costs associated with the Administration Centre cleaning are included in the annual operating costs budgets for the Administration Centre.

Other Department Considerations:

Administration Centre staff were involved in defining the scope of work included in the RFP.

Prepared by:

Paul Lucier
Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations

Brandon Heyer
Manager of Central Services

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO, Secretary-Treasurer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-30

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Guelph Lake Nature Centre Donor Naming Opportunities

Recommendation:

THAT Grand River Conservation Authority approves the donor naming opportunities for the Guelph Lake Nature Centre.

Summary:

The Guelph Lake Nature Centre has been a project of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and Grand River Conservation Foundation (GRCF) for over 15 years. The construction of the new nature centre began in 2024 and is expected to be completed in March, 2025. In order to raise the funds associated with the construction of the building, numerous fundraising strategies were utilized including naming opportunities for donors, meeting a certain financial threshold.

The GRCA and GRCF have policies such as the Gift Acceptance Policy and the Donor Naming Opportunities Policy that outline the requirements for donor naming approvals. This report summarizes the current naming opportunities and requires approval from both the GRCA and GRCF. The GRCF Board of Directors approved the report at their meeting on March 19, 2025.

Report:

The Guelph Lake Nature Centre (GLNC) project started in 2011, as a GRCA project and as a major fundraising campaign for GRCF. As part of the fundraising campaign, the GRCA and GRCF offered several naming opportunities to donors related to various aspects of the GLNC and its supporting lands. Over the past several years, two redesigns were driven by escalating building/construction costs and aligning with the anticipated future operating budget and needs of the program. As a result, the availability of donor naming opportunities has been reduced. Existing donor/gift agreements were considered in the redesign, and discussions with the GRCF and respective donors have occurred and continued through subsequent phases to ensure donors are recognized for their generous contributions to this project.

The GRCA and GRCF have policies and procedures regarding gift acceptance and donor naming opportunities for GRCA projects. These policies set out the types of gifts that may be accepted by the GRCA and GRCF, who may receive them, guidance on considering naming opportunities for GRCA assets, and consistency in recognition and communication once naming opportunities are approved. Approval of both the GRCA and GRCF is required.

The following naming opportunities are requested for approval in support of fundraising efforts of the GLNC:

- 1) Classroom 1 - Woods Foundation
- 2) Classroom 2 - In Tribute to Don Drone
- 3) Plaque on exterior wall at entrance to the building - Rotary Club of Guelph, Rotary Foundation
- 4) Indigenous Garden - Neighborhood Group, Bob Desautels
- 5) Pollinator Garden - Marilyn Murray

- 6) Surrounding trails - Bob Desautels - names of grandchildren
- 7) Observatory Space - Rotary Club of Guelph, Rotary Foundation
- 8) Recognition Wall inside building - donors who provided greater than \$10,000 to the project

Additional assets, e.g., two covered learning spaces may still be required for the environmental education program at GLNC. These will be completed outside this project and when funding has been secured. Potential naming opportunities will be explored, and should donations be secured for these assets, a report will be brought forward for approval by both boards.

The GRCF has agreed (through an MOU with the GRCA) to continue fundraising efforts towards the costs of construction of the GLNC. Should subsequent naming opportunities be identified, they will be brought forward for approval to both Boards.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable

Other Department Considerations:

The Grand River Conservation Foundation, the Central Services and the Strategic Communications and Environmental Education departments were consulted in the development of this report.

Submitted by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-21

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Water Quality - Update on Nitrates

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-21 – Water Quality – Update on Nitrates be received as information.

Summary:

Elevated nitrate levels in groundwater and surface water are an issue of concern in the Grand River watershed, with implications for drinking water supply and wastewater treatment. Over the past year the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) has enhanced monitoring, facilitated inter-agency discussions, engaged university researchers, secured additional funding for stewardship programs, and gathered information to support an amendment to the Grand River Source Protection Plan. Work will continue under the source water, water quality, and watershed services programs to engage partners in developing collaborative strategies to address the issue.

Report:

Report GM-06-24-52 described the sources of elevated concentrations of nitrate in the surface waters and groundwaters of the Grand River watershed, and the roles and responsibilities of the GRCA, municipalities, and provincial agencies. The GRCA's roles are to:

- Monitor and report on surface and groundwater quality at the watershed scale,
- Update the Grand River Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report to identify threats to drinking water sources and policies to manage threats,
- Facilitate inter-agency problem solving through the Grand River Water Management Plan (WMP) and engagement of the Water Managers Working Group, and
- Deliver a watershed-wide stewardship program providing financial support to rural landowners for projects that protect or improve water quality.

Over the past year, the GRCA has taken action to improve the state of knowledge about nitrate, secured funding to improve monitoring and expand the reach of stewardship programs, and engaged municipalities up and down the watershed in addressing the issue.

Monitoring and reporting

- Installed a second real-time nitrate sensor in the Grand River at Bridgeport. Coupled with the sensor at Brant, the information from these sensors supplements the data gathered from sampling at 34 sites across the watershed.
- Gathered and analyzed wastewater treatment plant effluent data through the Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program to help inform point and nonpoint source loading of nitrates to the Grand River during rainfall events.
- Updated analysis of surface and groundwater quality data to characterize nitrate concentrations, trends, and potential source areas. This information has been shared with municipal, First Nations, provincial, and academic partners.
- Secured new funding from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) for a one-year project to sample an additional 8 tributary sites and 27 wells for nitrates, to inform understanding of potential source areas.

Source water protection planning

- Gathered municipal data to assess trends in municipal water supply wells with identified nitrate Issues under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, to support annual reporting on the Grand River Source Protection Plan (SPP).
- Assembled municipal and GRCA nitrate data to support identifying a nitrate Issue for surface water intakes on the Grand River (Region of Waterloo, City of Brantford, Six Nations of the Grand River, Haldimand County (emergency intake)) through a future update to the SPP. Municipal source protection staff are being engaged to determine technical and policy next steps.

Fostering collaboration

- Co-hosted a meeting with City of Brantford to share information about nitrate conditions and impacts and gather input from university researchers. Participants included the Region of Waterloo, Six Nations of the Grand River, MECP, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, and academics from the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University.
- Held a half-day focus session on nitrates with the Water Managers Working Group. Thirty-four water managers from 16 organizations participated, receiving presentations from the Region of Waterloo, City of Brantford, Haldimand County, and the GRCA. The session illustrated the water supply and wastewater treatment implications of elevated nitrate levels. Haldimand reported on their recent work with the MECP to develop a nitrate limit for a new Caledonia Wastewater Treatment Plant. This is a direction we may see applied in other areas of the watershed in the future.
- Met one-on-one with staff from 11 municipalities to discuss initiating a scoped update of the collaborative Grand River Water Management Plan (WMP, 2014). Renewal of the plan will include review and update of strategies to address point and nonpoint source pollution.

Stewardship

- Secured new federal funding for continued implementation of cost-share grant programs for rural water quality projects. These new funds support some best practices known to be effective for nitrates (e.g., cover crops) and will support projects where municipal grants are limited, targeting one of the known source areas for nitrates (Nith River).
- Secured provincial funding to develop outreach materials and deliver water quality stewardship activities to children's water festivals.

Over the coming year, the GRCA will initiate a review of the water quality strategies of the WMP, advance identification of a nitrate Issue for drinking water intakes, and continue to engage municipal, First Nations, provincial, federal, and academic interest holders in collaboratively addressing elevated nitrate levels in the Grand watershed.

Financial Implications:

The GRCA's water quality programs are Category 2 programs funded under municipal Memorandums of Agreement, except for the provincial monitoring networks, which are Category 1 programs funded by municipal apportionment. The drinking water source protection program is a Category 1 program funded by the MECP.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Prepared by:

Janet Ivey
Manager of Water Resources

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-23

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Canadian Heritage River Report 2014-2024

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-23 – Canadian Heritage River Report 2014-2024 be received as information;

AND THAT the 2014-2024 Monitoring Report for the Grand River be submitted to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board for review.

Summary:

The Grand River Conservation Authority has prepared a 10-year monitoring report for submission to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board. The report describes how management and celebration of the Grand River's cultural heritage, natural heritage, and river-based recreation are evolving. While the GRCA's actions and activities are included, the reports are broad, documenting available information from many organizations and sources. Submission of the report is required to maintain the Canadian Heritage River designation.

Report:

The naming of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River was a collaborative achievement of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), federal and provincial agencies, municipalities, Six Nations of the Grand River, community groups, and notable heritage property owners and river outfitters.

To maintain the designation, every 10 years the GRCA submits a monitoring report to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (CHRB). The report describes how management and celebration of the Grand River's cultural heritage, natural heritage, and river-based recreation are evolving. While the GRCA's actions and activities are included, the reports are broad, documenting available information from many organizations and sources. Previous 10-year monitoring reports were submitted in 2004 and 2014.

The monitoring report follows a template prescribed by the CHRB. The report was developed with input from individuals, municipalities, First Nations, and nongovernmental organizations that work to steward the Grand River. Information was gathered at workshops and meetings and from websites, reports, an online survey, and annual monitoring reports prepared by the GRCA.

The GRCA also partnered with the University of Waterloo's interdisciplinary Collaborative Water Program to help identify changes, trends, and threats to the river's heritage. Nineteen graduate students from engineering to economics programs synthesized information from academic and other sources to comment on heritage values. The students were joined in a café style forum on October 30, 2024, by more than twenty experts from conservation authorities, academia, regional tourism organizations, trails organizations, cultural groups, and First Nations communities.

The report is included as Appendix A and will be submitted for CHRB review by March 31, 2025. As the largest watershed in Southern Ontario, spanning parts of 38 municipalities and two First Nations, there are countless actions taken by individuals and organizations each year that

contribute to understanding, interpreting, celebrating, and conserving the heritage of the Grand River and its tributaries. The report describes new directions and milestones over the past decade, including growing Indigenous cultural awareness, enhancements in recreational infrastructure and user experiences, and recognition of milestone anniversaries of seminal flooding events in the Grand River, including the 70th anniversary of Hurricane Hazel and 50th anniversary of the 1974 Great Flood.

Heritage Plaques

On September 26, 1994, a plaque was unveiled in Cambridge to commemorate the designation. Other plaques were installed in communities along the tributaries: Conestogo River (St. Jacobs), Nith River (New Hamburg), Speed River (Guelph) and Eramosa River (Township of Guelph-Eramosa). The Speed and Eramosa plaques have since been lost due to theft.

The GRCA has worked with Six Nations of the Grand River, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to update the English version of the plaque text and translate it into French, Mohawk, and Ojibwe. New plaques with all four languages are being fabricated to replace the missing Speed River and Eramosa River plaques and are expected to be installed in 2025.

Financial Implications:

Maintenance of the Canadian Heritage River designation is a Category 3 (non-mandatory) program. Preparation of the monitoring report was supported by a \$5,000 grant from the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board and deferred funds from previous years' heritage river activities. The CHRB is having the new plaques fabricated at its expense.

Other Department Considerations:

Staff from the Water Resources, Strategic Communications, Conservation Lands and Conservation Areas departments contributed to the monitoring report.

Prepared by:

Janet Ivey
Manager of Water Resources

Approved by:

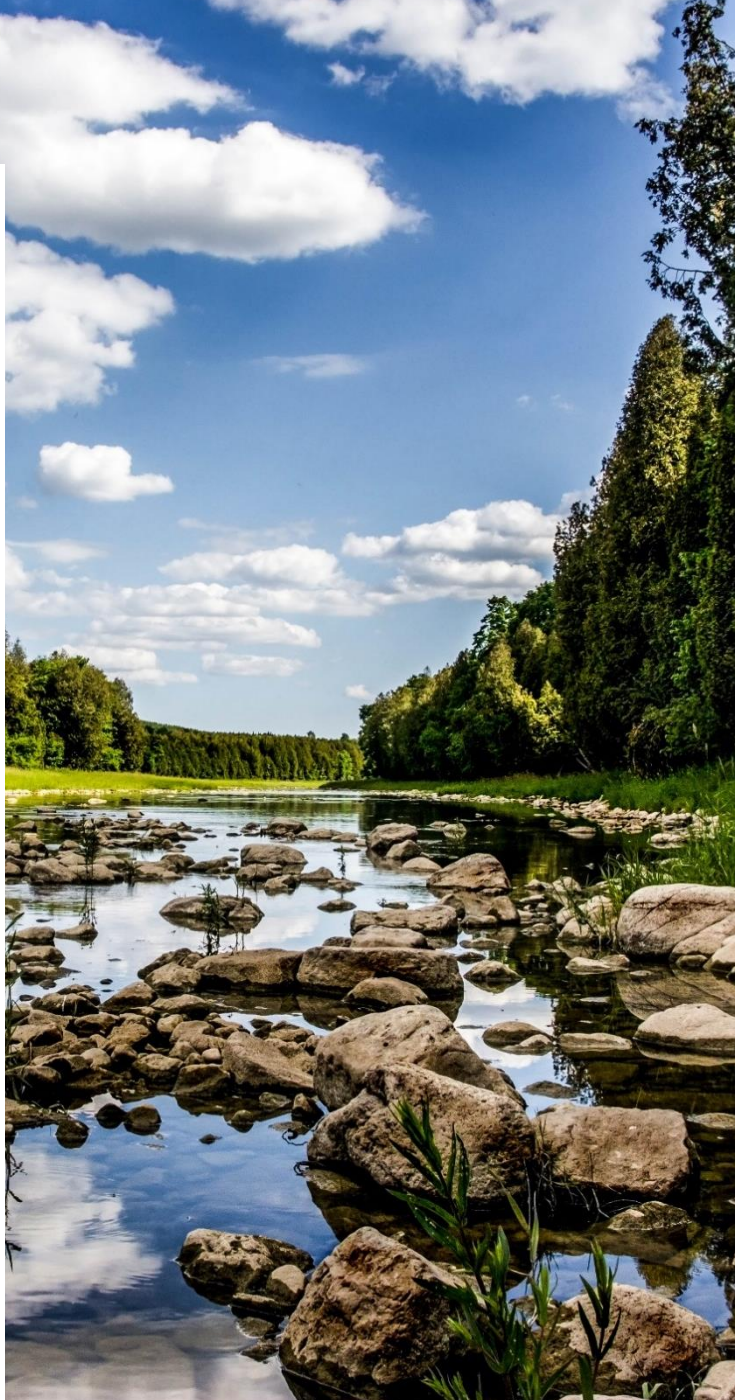
Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

The Grand River A Canadian Heritage River

Canadian Heritage River Systems
Ten Year Monitoring Report
2014-2024

March 2025, Draft

Prepared for the Canadian Heritage Rivers
Board by the Grand River Conservation
Authority



**Canadian
Heritage Rivers
System**

**Réseau des
rivières du patrimoine
canadien**

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სამხრეთ-აღმოსავლეთ
ქვეყანა**

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Introduction

The Grand River flows from Dundalk through rural and urban landscapes to Port Maitland on Lake Erie. The river is known by many names, including Ó:se Kaniataratátié', a Mohawk name meaning "Willow River", and Peshhinneguning, an Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) name meaning "the one that washes the timber down and drives away the grassweeds". These names reflect the traditional connections between the river and the land, and the people who call the watershed home.

The Grand River watershed is within the traditional territories of the Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The watershed includes lands within the Haldimand Proclamation (1784) and parts of the Between the Lakes Treaty (1792) and the Ajetance Treaty (1818).

The Grand River and its tributaries – the Conestogo, Eramosa, Nith, and Speed rivers – were named Canadian Heritage Rivers in 1994. The designation reflected the outstanding cultural and recreational values of the Grand River. This ten-year monitoring report documents how our collective understanding, interpretation, communication, and celebration of the river's natural, cultural, and recreational heritage has evolved over the past decade.

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) serves as a River Steward, the lead organization that undertakes reporting to maintain the Canadian Heritage River designation on behalf of the individuals, communities, and organizations that nominated the Grand River and continue to care for and steward the river.

Our watershed

The Grand River watershed is the largest in southern Ontario. It's about the size of Prince Edward Island – 6,800 square kilometres – but with more than 5 times the population. The Grand River begins as a small stream in the Dufferin Highlands and travels about 300 kilometres before emptying into Lake Erie at Port Maitland. Along the way, it picks up its major tributaries, the Conestogo, Nith, Speed, and Eramosa rivers, and Whiteman's and Fairchild creeks.

First Nations have been deeply connected to the land and water in the Grand River watershed since time immemorial. The watershed and river were sources of water, transportation, and habitat for the terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals First Nations relied on.

Roughly three centuries ago European settlement began, and communities grew along the river as it provided a source of water and power for mills. This led to the development of local industries and economic prosperity. Agricultural intensification, population growth, and industrial expansion altered the landscape and resulted in deforestation, draining of wetlands, water pollution, and habitat loss and fragmentation.

Today, the watershed spans parts of 38 municipalities and the reserves of Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. About 80% of the watershed's one million residents live in the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Guelph, and Brantford.

The watershed is a highly diverse and interconnected system and continues to be heavily influenced by intensive agricultural practices, population growth, changes to land cover and resource use, and climate change. Many individuals and organizations are working together to improve the health of the Grand River, by reducing sources of pollution, restoring terrestrial and aquatic habitats, conserving land and water resources, and fostering sustainable use and enjoyment of the river.

How the report was developed

This report was developed by the Grand River Conservation Authority with input from some of the individuals, municipalities, First Nations, and nongovernmental organizations that work to steward the Grand River. The report was shaped and informed by:

- The Canadian Heritage Rivers System *Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines* (2024), a key reference for heritage rivers that lays out the program principles, governance, nomination process, and reporting requirements (including guidance for ten-year monitoring reports),
- Annual monitoring reports (2015-2024) for the Grand River documenting significant events, actions, research, and/or studies that occurred over the last decade in relation to the heritage river, prepared by the GRCA,
- Information from many relevant public and private groups from websites, reports, information sessions, meetings, and a survey, and
- A partnership with the University of Waterloo's Collaborative Water Program.

A Heritage River Information Session was held in Cambridge on March 6, 2024. About 40 participants represented a mix of municipal, provincial, federal, private sector, and community organization interests. The objectives of the session were:

- To share information about the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River,
- To prepare to collect information for the ten-year monitoring report, and
- To provide an opportunity for participants to connect and collaborate to celebrate the Grand River and the 30th anniversary of the designation.

An online survey (Appendix A) was circulated to relevant groups and individuals to gather information on heritage river-related events, actions, studies, and changes and trends in heritage values over the last decade. Thirty responses were received, representing perspectives from the headwaters to the lower river. About half of the participants focused their responses on river-based recreation, while the other half responded to questions about human heritage or natural heritage. The survey informed the chronology of activities and discussion of heritage values presented below and in Appendix B.

The Collaborative Water Program (CWP) is an interdisciplinary graduate program serving all six faculties at the University of Waterloo. The program equips the next generation of water leaders in systems thinking and practical skills to understand and respond to complex water challenges. The GRCA partnered with the CWP to help identify changes, trends, and threats to the heritage values of the Grand River. Nineteen graduate students from engineering to economics programs synthesized information from peer-reviewed literature and publicly available datasets, consulting reports and other grey literature, and expert guidance, to comment on a subset of the heritage values. The students were joined in a world café style forum on October 30, 2024, by more than twenty experts from conservation authorities, academia, regional tourism organizations, trails organizations, cultural groups, and First Nations communities (the list of participants is included as Appendix C). Briefing notes prepared by the students informed the discussion of heritage values presented below and in Appendix D.

Chronology of significant events, actions, research, and/or studies

As the largest watershed in Southern Ontario, spanning parts of 38 municipalities and two First Nations, there are countless actions taken by individuals and organizations each year that

contribute to understanding, interpreting, celebrating, and conserving the heritage of the Grand River and its tributaries. As such, any accounting of the activities will be incomplete. Appendix B lists some of the activities that have occurred over the past decade. What follows in this section is a summary of substantive new directions or milestones over the past 10 years.

First Nations cultural awareness and reconciliation

A global and local conversation about Indigenous history, rights, treaties, truth and reconciliation is underway and is influencing how we understand the heritage of the Grand River and the history of the First Nations who lived here long before European settlement.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) was endorsed by the Government of Canada in 2016. The declaration states 46 articles or rights that constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of Indigenous peoples. The articles are relevant to the Canadian Heritage River designation, speaking to the right of Indigenous peoples to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. The First Nations in the Grand River watershed have unique ways of knowing and stewarding the Grand River that have existed since time immemorial.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015) documents the truth of survivors of residential schools and issues 94 calls to action to address the legacy of residential schools and to advance reconciliation. The Grand River watershed is home to the former Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School which operated from 1885 to 1970. Six Nations of the Grand River now operates the Woodland Cultural Center from the building and offers virtual tours to share the history of the residential school and the experiences of survivors.

The heritage of the Grand River is inherently tied to the history, knowledge, values and traditions of the First Nations that continue to call the watershed home. Many events and activities are helping to foster greater awareness and appreciation for Indigenous ways of knowing and stewarding the river, including:

- Two Row on the Grand¹, held annually since 2016, is a 10-day canoe trip on the Grand River where Indigenous and Non-Indigenous participants build mutual respect and understanding of values and culture through the shared experience. The canoe trip is a physical embodiment of the Two Row Wampum, the original peace treaty between Indigenous and settler communities. An article published in the Canadian Journal of Native Education in 2019 illustrated the experiences of an Indigenous participant and a non-Indigenous participant in the event².
- First Nations-led Water Walks³ have become annual events in the watershed. Inspired by Anishnaabe Elder Josephine-Baa Mandamin, people from all nations join in a week-long ceremonial walk honoring the Nibi (water) from the river's mouth to the headwaters.
- Ohneganos Ohnegahde:gyo⁴ is an Indigenous water research program led by McMaster University's Dr. Dawn Martin Hill. This interdisciplinary team of academics, local experts and project partners is creating new ways to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science. Among other initiatives, Ohneganos and its partners held a Traditional Ecological Knowledge Summit on March 6, 2024, at Six Nations of the

¹ [Two Row On The Grand | Annual Canoe Paddle on the Grand River](#)

² Freeman, B. and T. Van Katwyk. 2019. Testing the Waters: Engaging the Tekeni Teyoharke Kahswenhtake/Two Row Wampum into a Research Paradigm. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 41 (1): 146-167. ([link](#))

³ [All Nations Grand River Water Walk](#)

⁴ [Ohneganos](#)

Grand River. Through digital oral storytelling, a youth-led video podcast, and other projects, the group is helping to share Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

In 2021 a new Strategic Plan was released by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board for 2020-2030. The strategy acknowledged that the program has not adequately included or considered Indigenous perspectives, and it identified advancing reconciliation on Canadian Heritage Rivers as a strategic priority. Participants in the Collaborative Water Program heritage river workshop agreed, noting opportunities to incorporate more Indigenous perspectives.

Connecting with the Grand River

The Grand River forms the backbone of a growing network of trails and water routes enjoyed by hikers, cyclists, and paddlers. Much work has been done by recreational interest groups, Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs), and others, to improve recreational infrastructure and user experiences. Art and cultural experiences are helping to connect people with the Grand River and its history. Some key initiatives are noted below while other examples are included in Appendix B.

- Grand River Access Point Improvement Project: RTOs working with the GRCA, municipalities, and many other partners are assessing river usage and awareness and improving river access points. The project began with development of an Access Point Standards Manual and Signage and Style Guide. The new standards were piloted at Wilson's Flats in the Township of Centre Wellington and projects followed at Idlewood Creek in the City of Kitchener, West Montrose in the Township of Woolwich, the Cambridge to Paris Rail Trailhead in the City of Cambridge, and Otterbein Road in the City of Kitchener. Improvements have included parking, washrooms, canoe racks, picnic tables and benches, information kiosks and maps, garbage bins, and improved signage (e.g., river mile markers).
- Opportunities to paddle the Grand River are expanding. Six Nations Tourism offers guided tours that share information about First Nations beliefs, centred on the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address. Grand River Rafting developed a new paddling route for the lower Grand River from York to Cayuga, named Steamboat Alley in recognition of the historical development of locks and canals for steamship passage by the Grand River Navigation Company. Grand River Experiences developed a Nith River guided canoe trip.
- Grand River Histories Project⁵, lead by RTO #4, recognizes that telling the story of the Grand River is as important for fostering connection with the river as creating recreational infrastructure. Storytellers, artists, and creatives came together to share experiences, resulting in the creation of a program to fund experience development. Funding supported Tom Ostapchuk's short film *The Grand: From source to mouth*⁶, documenting his self supported source to mouth kayak trip down the Grand River. The film was an official selection for the Paddling Film Festival World Tour, the Waterwalker Film Festival, and the Forest City Film Festival.
- The Grand River Community Play Project: *The Voice of the River*⁵, led by playwright Peter Smith, held interactive performances throughout the watershed, serving as "prologues" for a planned event running the length of the river in 2025. Held in partnership with RTO #4 and members of Six Nations of the Grand River, the project

⁵ [The Grand River Community Play Project Case Study, Prologue #1](#), Chiefswood, November 2022

⁶ [The Grand - Source to mouth](#)

uses performance and storytelling to reconnect people with the river and a sense of place.

Recognizing milestones

The year 2024 marks the 30th anniversary of the naming of the Grand River and its tributaries as Canadian Heritage Rivers. This milestone has been acknowledged by many groups in many ways, including:

- *Currents of Change: Inspiring Action along the Grand River*, a new exhibit that opened at the Regional Municipality of Waterloo's McDougall Cottage Historic Site in June 2024. Through a blend of history, ecology, and Indigenous and settler narratives, this captivating exhibit examines the profound and dynamic connection between the Grand River, the City of Cambridge's heritage, and our collective future. The exhibit was accompanied by the *Grand Inspirations Art Contest* that invited artists of all media to submit a work that expresses their unique connection to the Grand River. Forty-one entries were received, and winning entries were selected by public voting and displayed as part of the Currents of Change exhibit.
- River Heritage Festival: This festival held on September 22, 2024, at the GRCA's Brant Conservation Area celebrated the river with exhibits from 17 parties, including the Conservation Authority, local municipalities, First Nations, and non-governmental arts, recreation, environmental, and cultural organizations. A couple of hundred people participated and there were opportunities to bike, hike, and paddle on the river.
- Many other public and private sector events acknowledged the 30th anniversary and included celebration of the River's heritage, including the interactive Voice of the River: The Grand River Community Play Project at the annual Hillside Festival on the Speed River at Guelph Lake Conservation Area, the Bikes and Blues Festival held by Water Cycles in Elora, special promotions by outfitter Grand River Rafting Company, and a River Talks lecture series held by Grand River Dinner Cruises and Six Nations Tourism.

Appendix B includes more events and activities held in 2024 to recognize the 30th anniversary of the Grand River's naming as a Canadian Heritage River.

In addition to marking the 30th anniversary of the designation, 2024 marked the 50th anniversary of the Great Flood of 1974 that inundated communities along the Grand River, including Kitchener (Bridgeport), Cambridge (Galt) and Brantford, causing millions of dollars in damages. This year was also the 70th anniversary of Hurricane Hazel, a historic storm that significantly impacted Southern Ontario and fundamentally reshaped the approach to flood protection and management. These milestones in how river communities have been impacted and adapted to fluctuating water levels were recognized locally:

- Cambridge's Gaslight District includes the River Lines art installation. Floor sensors and musical sounds encourage participants to connect with each other in honor of the way communities worked together to respond to the Great Flood.
- The Cambridge Fire Hall Museum & Education Centre and its partners created The Great Flood of '74 - Cambridge's Watershed Moment. The event engaged over 1,000 participants in exhibits, walking tours, local businesses, presentations, videos, and interviews. The community will continue to benefit from the events as pictures, scrap books, oral histories and other materials are collected and donated to local archives for posterity.
- The Cambridge Public Library created a display on Hurricane Hazel, including photos, newspaper articles and technical information.

Changes and threats to natural, cultural and recreational values

The following sections highlight some of ways the natural, cultural and recreational values of the Grand River have been observed to be changing over the last decade. More detailed information is presented in Appendix D, according to the framework established by the Canadian Heritage Rivers System Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines (2024).

Natural heritage values

The Grand River was not designated a Canadian Heritage River based on its natural heritage values. However, in keeping with the Canadian Heritage Rivers System Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines (2024), natural heritage values are included in annual and ten-year reports. Despite not being designated for natural heritage, the river and its watershed contain an abundance of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that support a variety of flora and fauna of national significance.

The watershed's natural heritage is described in more detail in a variety of places, including but not limited to:

- Watershed-scale reports, including a series of eleven Natural Heritage Characterization Reports⁷ produced by the GRCA between 2017-2022, a State of Water Resources report (2020), the Grand River Water Management Plan (2014), the Grand River Watershed Fisheries Management Plan (1998), and the Grand River Watershed Forest Plan (2004).
- Municipal natural heritage system reports and mapping, as well as studies to guide urban area expansions, such as those completed over the last decade for Blair Creek, Freeport Creek, Randall and Breslau Drains, and the tributaries of south Guelph and north Brantford.
- Collaborations with First Nations, including a Six Nations-led survey of fish consumption and an Ohneganos-affiliated survey of fish and macroinvertebrate communities in McKenzie Creek, a tributary of the southern Grand River, both completed in 2024.

The natural heritage values of the Grand River were fundamentally impacted by European settlement of the watershed about three centuries ago. A recent Watershed Report Card was prepared by the GRCA to benchmark watershed conditions. The report card noted that forest cover is generally low, especially in urban areas and productive farmlands. Forest cover ranges from 26% of the land area in the McKenzie Creek basin, to 11% of the land area in the Conestogo River basin. Overall, wetlands cover about 10% of the watershed. The Upper Grand River, Speed River, and Whiteman's Creek basins had the greatest extents of wetland cover, while the Conestogo River and lower Grand River basins had the lowest extents.

Municipalities, non-governmental organizations, the GRCA and other agencies continue to work together to improve aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in the Grand River watershed. Notable initiatives over the past decade include:

- The City of Kitchener established a Habitat Banking Arrangement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to track additions and losses of stream habitat resulting from infrastructure projects. The City has rehabilitated or naturalized about 4.3 km of creeks over the past decade. Projects included removing concrete-lined channels, widening and naturalizing watercourses, and improving aquatic habitat. These projects produce a range of benefits from healthier ecosystems to more climate resilient urban communities.

⁷ [Natural Heritage Systems | Grand River Conservation Authority](#)

- The City of Waterloo has completed an average of 1 creek rehabilitation/restoration project every year over the past decade. These projects have included bank stabilization measures, reconfiguration where required, restoration and rehabilitation of corridor features such as wildlife sanctuary, wetland protection and public active transportation routes. The City continues to prioritize creek work through its environmental studies and updates to the Stormwater Management Master Plan.
- Ducks Unlimited Canada has a long history of restoring and conserving wetlands within the Grand River watershed, with most of these projects being delivered through DUC's small wetland restoration and large wetland rebuild programs in partnership with private landowners. Since 2014 DUC has restored a total 710 acres of wetland habitat, through 115 individual projects. In addition, DUC has secured 1910 acres of existing uplands and 960 acres of existing wetlands through the use of private conservation agreements to ensure that these crucial habitats remain on the landscape.
- The Mill Creek Stewardship Rangers Program rehabilitated > 1 km of Mill Creek and removed beaver dams to improve fish passage (Cambridge).
- Since 2014 the GRCA has facilitated planting of 983,000 trees on private land. These tree planting projects include retirement of 560 ha of marginal agricultural lands, establishment of 188 km of windbreaks and 72 km of watercourse buffer. The GRCA worked with private landowners to establish an additional 20 ha of wetland and 10 ha of grassland habitat.

Survey respondents noted population growth, invasive species, and climate change as stressors that are impacting natural heritage values in the Grand River watershed. Fostering individual connection to the river through outdoor environmental education and experiences were recommended to encourage stewardship.

Cultural heritage values

Greater awareness and appreciation for First Nations ways of knowing and stewarding the river are changing peoples' understanding and expectations of river heritage experiences. Survey respondents and participants in the world café forum held with the University of Waterloo were concerned that many watershed residents are disconnected from the river and suggested improved awareness and appreciation for the spiritual role of the river in First Nations' beliefs as an opportunity to reconnect.

A Heritage Working Group, formed in the 1990s to help increase community involvement and commitment to the celebration and management of human heritage resources in the Grand River watershed, held 5 workshops over the past decade, attracting hundreds of participants:

- Timeline/waterline: Grand culture at the confluence (2015). This one-day event featured speakers on the First World War and the role of community organizations in habitat restoration.
- Roots and shoots: marking the bicentennial of the founding of Dumfries Township 1816 - 2016 (2016).
- Historical Gathering and Heritage Day Workshop (2017). Held in partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, this three-day event showcased the First Nation's lands, waters, peoples, and role in shaping Ontario and Canada both before and after Confederation.

- Heritage Makes Sense (2018). A day-long workshop with presentations on heritage renovations, film and built heritage, cultural heritage landscape studies, and leveraging local assets to grow a cultural economy.
- Brantford: celebrating our heritage, building our future (2019).

Over the past decade, provincial legislation for heritage structure preservation and environmental protection has continued to evolve, resulting in shifting responsibilities for protection of elements of the watershed's heritage. For instance, changes to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2022 affected procedures and criteria for listing properties on municipal registers, designating properties under the Ontario Heritage Act, and establishing Heritage Conservation Districts. These changes have the potential to increase the risk of demolition or loss of built heritage in river-based communities.

Recreational heritage values

River touring, swimming, fishing and hunting, exploring trails, and water-related celebrations remain very popular throughout the watershed. As noted above, the Grand River forms the backbone of a growing network of trails, paths, and paddle routes. Investments in infrastructure and improvements in public access to recreational information through online portals and resources are connecting people to the river.

While opportunities to experience the Grand River are growing, so too are the challenges associated with providing nature-based recreational opportunities to a growing population and addressing changing environmental conditions.

Survey responses reflected the broad trends in recreation seen across the watershed – rising demand for river-based recreation, conflicting uses in shared spaces (e.g., motorized and non-motorized watercraft, conflicting trail user groups), expanding recreational infrastructure (e.g., trails) and offerings (e.g., guided tours), and the impacts of a warming climate on winter season activities (e.g., fewer opportunities for ice fishing and more opportunities for winter hiking).

Some interest holders are working towards further development of the Grand River as a destination, enhancing infrastructure (trails, access points, signage) and building linkages between river attractions and nearby amenities, while others are concerned about the impacts of growing river tourism on the environment and human safety. A balanced approach will be needed.

Grand River Conservation Areas

The GRCA owns and operates 11 fee-for-use conservation areas and the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, collectively called Grand River Conservation Areas (CAs). Many of these areas have been established around the multi-purpose reservoirs and their primary purpose is to support GRCA's flood management program. Others are located directly along the Grand River for recreational purposes only. Trends noted in CA operations over the past decade illustrate some of the challenges noted by recreational interest holders and provide examples of how they are being addressed.

As the watershed's population grows, so has the demand for access to nature-based and river-based recreation and outdoor experiences. Over the past decade, the number of visitors to CAs has consistently increased as people seek open spaces to enjoy. This includes day-use visitors, over-night and seasonal campers, and boat-launch users. The number of new Canadians visiting CAs is also on the rise, along with visitors from beyond local cities, reaching as far as the Greater Toronto Area.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted CA operations, leading to the areas being busier than ever. For example, from 2019 to 2022, Laurel Creek CA saw a 102% increase in the

number of day-use visitors. Shade's Mills CA, once known as "Cambridge's hidden gem", has since had visitation numbers triple as people became more aware of the area. A strategy for managing area capacities was implemented, including identifying daily capacity numbers and establishing conservation area-specific visitation management plans. Initially focused on the pandemic and public safety, these plans are still utilized and have since evolved to focus on balancing visitor experiences and environmental sustainability. New measures have included installation of automatic entry gates at three CAs, introduction of an online reservation system at the Elora Quarry CA, and creation of a Conservation Area Activity Status website, allowing visitors to check available capacity at CAs in real-time.

Variable weather conditions and the changing climate are affecting both demand for and availability of some types of river- and nature-based recreation. For instance, beaches at CAs are becoming busier earlier in the season and remaining active later into the year. This trend is driven by warmer temperatures arriving sooner in the spring and persisting longer into the fall, effectively extending the beach season.

Warmer and fluctuating winter temperatures have resulted in a noticeable decrease in the number of days suitable for winter activities. Ice fishing is offered at three CAs; however, Belwood Lake CA reported little to no ice fishing opportunities and poor ice conditions over the past four winter seasons. Similarly, suitable conditions for skiing and snowshoeing have declined, as there is often insufficient snow cover to groom or set cross-country skiing trails or offer ski and snowshoe rentals. Consequently, Laurel Creek CA ended its ski and snowshoe rental program in 2019. Winter conditions are variable year over year, with snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and ice fishing available at some CAs in 2024/2025. There is continued growth in more passive winter activities such as hiking and birding, as observed at Rockwood CA where visitors enjoy the trails and community firepit during the shoulder and winter seasons.

The GRCA's Conservation Areas are vital parts of the recreational infrastructure in their communities, providing locations for a wide range of activities and the opportunity to connect with nature and appreciate the beauty of the Grand River watershed. In 2024, the GRCA developed a Conservation Areas Strategy to guide land management decisions.

Integrity values

Appendix E summarizes changes to the natural, cultural, and recreational integrity values that formed part of the nomination process for the Canadian Heritage River designation. Integrity values were intended to complement the heritage values described in Appendix D. For instance, a key cultural heritage integrity value is to ensure that the visual character of the river enables uninterrupted appreciation of at least one of the periods of the river's historical importance.

The establishment of Cultural Heritage Landscapes and Heritage Conservation Districts help to protect the cultural history of areas located along the river. Over the last decade, the Black Bridge Cultural Heritage Landscape was established and cultural heritage landscape studies completed by the townships of Woolwich, Wellesley, Centre Wellington, Wilmot and North Dumfries and the cities of Waterloo and Guelph. Heritage conservation district studies were undertaken by the cities of Guelph and Cambridge.

Many municipalities are emphasizing their community's connection to the river through trails and restoration projects as well as adaptive re-use of old mills and historic buildings located along the river (i.e. Cambridge Gaslight District).

The Grand Strategy Recommendations and Current Status

The goals of The Grand Strategy for Managing the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River (1994) are:

- To strengthen, through shared responsibility, the knowledge, stewardship and enjoyment of the heritage and recreational resources of the Grand River watershed.
- To improve the well-being of all life in the Grand River watershed.

Appendix F summarizes actions proposed in 1994 to support the conservation and celebration of the natural heritage, cultural heritage, and recreational values of the Grand River. The actions reflect the roles and responsibilities of the involved parties at the time. In the intervening 30 years, some roles have changed. For instance, changes to the Ontario Heritage Act created a stronger role for municipalities in cultural heritage planning. In contrast, amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act reduced the GRCA's involvement in natural heritage and cultural heritage planning. Finally, Regional Tourism Organizations have been established and are playing a growing role in fostering collaboration on river-based recreational and tourism issues.

Engagement to support preparation of this report and events to recognize the 30th anniversary of the designation revealed that despite changing roles and responsibilities, there are many individuals and organizations that are actively involved in the conservation, interpretation, and sharing of information about the Grand River's heritage. The information presented in the preceding sections and supporting Appendices highlight some of the many actions under way.

While much has changed in the thirty years since the Strategy was submitted to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board in support of the Grand River's nomination, many individuals, groups, First Nations, municipalities, and agencies continue to advocate, singly and together, for the Strategy's overarching goals.

Condition of Plaques

The designation of the Grand River and its tributaries as Canadian Heritage Rivers was marked with a ceremony in Cambridge on September 26, 1994. A plaque was unveiled to commemorate the designation. Other plaques are in communities along the other four rivers of the Grand River system.

In 2024, the English, French, and Mohawk wording of the commemorative text was updated and a new Anishinaabemowin translation created. It is anticipated that in 2025, new four language plaques will be installed at Speed River and Eramosa River locations, to replace missing plaques.

Appendix G summarizes the condition of the remaining plaques.

River spotlight

Some of the actions included in this monitoring report can be experienced through engaging videos, including the following:

- Tom Ostapchuk created the short film [The Grand: From source to mouth](#), documenting his self supported source to mouth kayak trip down the Grand River.
- Two Row on the Grand – the [2024 10-day paddle experience](#).
- The New Fly Fisher highlights a Brown Trout Fishery [success story](#).
- City of Kitchener [prepares for climate change](#) by strengthening it's stormwater management system and restoring streams.

- GRCA's 2014 [Heritage River Awards](#).

Summary of Benefits and/or Detrimental Effects Since Designation

Many private organizations and public institutions continue to note the Grand River's status as a Canadian Heritage River in strategic planning, marketing, and other initiatives, reflecting the benefits that many perceive in the designation. Most of the respondents to the survey felt that the designation has been of benefit, and almost all identified multiple benefits. The most noted benefits were cultural benefits, recreational benefits, and improved knowledge and stewardship.

Of those that felt the designation had not been of benefit, some were concerned about the environmental impacts of increasing population and marketing of the river as a destination. Some noted that funding for ongoing coordination of interest holders would allow for greater collaboration and ability to capitalize on the potential benefits of the designation.

Type of Benefit	Description
Environmental Benefits	
Cultural Benefits	The promotion of the Canadian Heritage River designation by GRCA and other agencies has provided a greater awareness of cultural heritage amongst watershed residents.
Recreational Benefits	<p>The designation has piqued interest in recreational pursuits like paddling. Some paddlers report meeting visitors along the river who were attracted to it due to the designation.</p> <p>There have been more trails and river access points created to accommodate the growing number of recreationists.</p> <p>Increased interest in river-based recreation has led to the establishment of outdoor adventure companies which offer an even wider range of activities for people to explore (i.e. stand up paddleboarding and overnight camping trips) over a wide geographic area within the watershed.</p>
Improved Knowledge	A greater number of people are using the river to explore and learn about the natural environment and cultural history while gaining health benefits at the same time through paddling, hiking and other physical activities.
Monetary Benefits	<p>Increased use of the river by locals and visitors attracted to the area because of the designation increase profits for the local economy. For example, businesses such as restaurants, cafes, outfitting companies, convenience stores can all benefit from river-based tourism and recreation.</p> <p>Riverside promenades, parks and commercial venues are popular for recreational uses, but also events like festivals and weddings which stimulate the local economy.</p>
Stewardship	Trail groups and other recreation-focused organizations have continued to maintain existing trails and advocate for more of them.

Type of Benefit	Description
	<p>Many groups organize and participate in trail and river clean up days on a voluntary basis. They also provide interpretive events to educate the public on the natural heritage features and recreational opportunities offered by the river.</p>
<p>Community Engagement and Collaboration</p>	<p>The designation and resulting higher profile of the river has led to the authoring of many books and guides about the river, outdoor festivals and other events.</p> <p>A number of river management activities have been accomplished including but not limited to the Grand River Fish Management Plan (1998), Grand River Forest Plan (2004) and the Grand River Water Management Plan Update (2014). All of these have encouraged community participation and multi-agency collaboration.</p> <p>GRCA's website contains a heritage section which includes a description of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, the designation process, the Canadian Heritage River plaques, the Grand Strategy, among other topics (www.grandriver.ca).</p> <p>The designation and the 30th Anniversary have been widely promoted in the social media posts of the GRCA and many other organizations.</p> <p>River Heritage Festival: This festival held on September 22, 2024, at the GRCA's Brant Conservation Area celebrated the river with exhibits from 17 parties, including the Conservation Authority, local municipalities, First Nations, and non-governmental arts, recreation, environmental, and cultural organizations. A couple of hundred people participated and there were opportunities to bike, hike, and paddle on the river.</p>
<p>Education</p>	

Overall Assessment

The conclusion of this report is that the Grand River's designation as a Canadian Heritage River should remain in place. There remains strong public interest in the Grand River and its status as a Canadian Heritage River. Many opportunities exist to continue to conserve, interpret, and celebrate the Grand's natural heritage, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities. The 30th anniversary of the designation has prompted renewal of inter-organizational connections, revealing new ways to work together to achieve the common goals of the Grand Strategy:

- To strengthen, through shared responsibility, the knowledge, stewardship and enjoyment of the heritage and recreational resources of the Grand River watershed.
- To improve the well-being of all life in the Grand River watershed.

Appendix A: Heritage River Survey



Grand
Canadian Heritage River

Rivière du patrimoine canadien
Grand

Heritage Survey - Grand River

This year marks the 30th anniversary of designation of the Grand, Conestogo, Nith, Speed, and Eramosa Rivers as a Canadian Heritage River. To maintain this special status, the Grand River Conservation Authority is preparing a monitoring report to the Canadian Heritage River Secretariat.

The purpose of this survey is to document **events, actions, studies, changes (improvements/losses) and trends in river-related cultural heritage, recreation, tourism, and natural heritage** in the Grand River watershed between 2014 and 2024.

Your information will help us develop a more complete understanding of how the heritage of the Grand River is changing, being conserved, and celebrated.

NOTICE OF COLLECTION

Pursuant to section 29(2) of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Individual Privacy Act, RSO 1990, the personal information contained on this form/survey is collected under the legal authority of the Conservation Authorities Act, RSO 1990. This information is being collected for the purpose of preparing a report to the Canadian Heritage River Secretariat. Questions about this collection of personal information should be directed to the Manager of Water Resources, Grand River Conservation Authority, 400 Clyde Road, P.O. Box 729, Cambridge, Ontario, N1R 5W6. (519-621-2761).

* Required

1. What municipality, First Nation, or organization are you reporting on behalf of? *

2. Please list any river-related events that you held between 2014 and 2024. Include the event name, date, location, who was involved, and purpose.

3. Please list any studies, plans, research or other activities that you undertook between 2014 and 2024 that were river-related or focused on features located near the rivers. Include the study name, date, purpose, and a link to related reports if available.

4. We have a couple of questions about how heritage values and resources are changing over time. To help focus your responses, tell us what aspect of heritage you are primarily contributing information on: *

- Human/cultural heritage:** historical human use of the rivers or the influence the rivers have had on human activities (e.g., historical fishing and hunting, water use, water-based transportation, human settlement near the rivers, spiritual or cultural associations), sites, structures, artifacts
- Recreation/tourism:** water sports, swimming, recreational fishing and hunting, land or water-based trails, parks, winter activities, nature appreciation, lookouts, cultural events and festivals
- Natural heritage:** interaction of land and water and the hydrologic (water) cycle, aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems

5. Are historical uses of the rivers or cultural heritage resources (e.g., sites, structures, artifacts) changing for the better or worse? Please use the scales below to indicate whether you think the cultural heritage values of the Grand River are changing. *

	Declining	No change	Improving	Not sure
Resource harvesting - fishing, hunting, water use/extraction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water transport - navigation, commercial, exploration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Riparian settlement - near-river dwellings or communities, river crossings (bridges, fords, ferries)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Culture - spiritual associations, cultural expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jurisdictional issues - conflict, boundaries, environmental regulation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Are river-based recreation or tourism changing for the better or the worse? Please use the scales below to indicate whether you think the recreational heritage values of the Grand River are changing. *

	Declining	No change	Improving	Not sure
River touring - paddling, portages, boating, individual or group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water contact - swimming, water skiing, tubing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Angling and hunting - access points, fish passage, fly or ice fishing, hunting areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trails and corridors - access points, multi-purpose trails, hiking, cycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks and wildlife management areas - camping, day use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Winter activities - snowmobiling, dog sledding, skating, skiing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature/scenic appreciation - outdoor education, organized events, scenic vistas, lookouts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Events and festivals, cultural tours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Is the natural heritage of the Grand River changing for the better or worse? Please use the scales below to indicate whether you think the natural heritage values of the Grand River are changing. *

	Declining	No change	Improving	Not sure
Hydrology - water cycling, water quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physiography - geology, topography, landforms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
River morphology - valleys, channels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aquatic ecosystems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Terrestrial ecosystems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vegetation - significant plant communities, rare plant species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fauna - significant animal populations, rare animal species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. If you noted improving or declining conditions in the last question, describe the reason for the change (e.g., climate change, population growth, other threat/stressor, positive management action) and any actions that have been taken in response.

9. What additional work needs to be done to conserve, interpret, or celebrate the heritage of the Grand River?

10. Has the Canadian Heritage River designation been of benefit? Please select as many options as apply.

- The designation has not been of benefit
- Yes, there have been cultural benefits
- Yes, there have been recreational benefits
- Yes, there has been improved knowledge
- Yes, there have been monetary benefits
- Yes, there has been improved stewardship
- Yes, there has been more community engagement and collaboration
- Yes, there has been more education about the river
- Yes, there have been environmental benefits
- Other

11. Please share links to documentation, files, videos or other media that showcases work, activities, stories or events on or about the Grand, Speed, Eramosa, Conestogo or Nith rivers.

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 Microsoft Forms

Appendix B: Chronology of Significant Events, Actions, Research, and/or Studies

2014

- The 17th Annual Heritage Day Workshop was held at the Six Nations Polytechnic in Ohsweken. The agenda was titled “Crossroads of Conflict, Path of Peace: Legacy of a Living Culture”. The focus of the day was the First Nation involvement in the War of 1812 and how it shaped First Nations Culture in the Grand River Watershed.
- A number of outdoor, natural heritage, and recreational events were held throughout the watershed such as the Guelph Rotary Forest Earth Day, Waterloo Earth Day, Guelph’s 2 Rivers Festival, Youth Outdoors Day at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, Run for the Toad race at Pinehurst, Guelph’s Hillside Festival, Day of 1000 Canoes in Haldimand County and the Dunnville Mudcat Festival.
- Many cultural heritage events were also held such as Oktoberfest in Kitchener-Waterloo, Mapleton Harvest Festival, and the Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival.
- There were several organized tree planting days such as the New Forest in the City Tree Planting in Brantford and the Guelph Rotary Forest Earth Day tree planting – both in April.
- Homer Watson gallery planned special events to celebrate the Grand River’s 20th anniversary as a Canadian Heritage River. These events include, special speakers talking about the Grand River, river-related art lessons, and a special art exhibit with a theme around the Grand River.
- Creation of a Haldimand Water Festival which is focused on educating children around the impact and importance of water.
- A local history fair held in the City of Cambridge called “Shaping the Legacy of the Grand River” and focused on the flood of the Grand River in 1974. It included a showing of the film about the flood called One Day in May that examines the causes and impact of the flood
- Watershed Heritage Awards presented to those who were responsible and continue to be actively involved with the Grand River as a Heritage River for the past 20 years.
- The collaborative, voluntary Grand River Water Management Plan was endorsed by the GRCA and 15 partner agencies, including watershed municipalities, provincial ministries, one federal department and Six Nations of the Grand River. The goals of the plan are to: 1) ensure water supplies, 2) improve water quality to improve river health and the reduce the river’s impact on Lake Erie, 3) reduce flood damage potential, and 4) build resilience to climate change.
- Reconstruction of the Drimmie Dam in Elora was completed. The dam was built in the 19th century to provide power to a nearby mill. The dam and its pond have been featured in numerous photos and paintings, including an iconic work by A.J. Casson of the Group of Seven. The falls immediately below the dam are used for recreational purposes, particularly white-water kayaking and river tubing.
- A historical walking tour of the Village of Arthur, known as Canada’s most patriotic Village, occurred in October 2014 and highlighted the adaptation of murals to highlight the Village’s history.

- Rehabilitation of Bridge 8 which is a Heritage Bridge candidate located in East-Garafraxa Township.
- Repurposing and restoring of the Elora Mill in the Township of Centre Wellington began. The project included restoration of five buildings: the original mill, with a stable; the granary; a commercial warehouse structure; a mill cottage; and a brick home. The project was completed in 2018
- The Emerald Ash Borer Working Group together developed tree hazard risk zone mapping for GRCA Parks. Mapping will support and prioritize tree hazard management related to emerald ash borer impacts and other tree hazards.
- GRCA implemented a variety of management initiatives at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area including grassland habitat creation and mowing, plantation thinning, monitoring of marsh and grassland birds, and monitoring of Great egret Fall roosting areas.
- Planting of 95,000 trees on GRCA properties including the co-ordination of 8 volunteer tree planting events at various locations including Dumfries Conservation Area, Snyder's Flats, and Guelph Lake.
- Led tours of restoration projects on GRCA properties for several groups; including the Grand River Conservation Foundation, the Field Botanists of Ontario, and the Society of Ecological Restoration – Ontario Chapter, Waterloo Wellington Woodlot Association, University of Waterloo Water Management Course.

2015

- A large number of recreational and educational events were held throughout the watershed. These included events such as the 2 Rivers Festival in Guelph, Friends of the Grand River's Grand River Spey Clave in Brantford, Grand Opportunities Fly Fishing Forum in Fergus, Youth Outdoors Day in Grand Valley, GRCA's Trees and Trout Workshop in Burford and the Day of a Thousand Canoes in Haldimand.
- The Waterloo Wellington Children's Groundwater Festival celebrated its 20th Anniversary.
- A variety of cultural heritage events were held such as the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival, Mill Race Festival of Folk Music in Cambridge, Galt's Grandfest, Dunnville's Mudcat Festival, Riverfest in Elora, Grand River Champion of Champions Powwow in Ohsweken and Springtime in Paris Festival.
- *Doors Open* events showcasing local heritage sites were hosted by several communities within the watershed.
- The 18th Annual Heritage Day Workshop was held in Guelph with the theme *Grand Culture at the Confluence*, and highlights Guelph's connection to World War I and the Natural and Cultural History of the Guelph area.
- The Grand River Conservation Foundation celebrated its 50th anniversary. Since 1965, The Foundation has raised \$11 million in funds for conservation and outdoor education projects related to the GRCA.
- GRCA hosted 8 community tree planting events at Guelph Lake Rotary Forest, Dumfries Conservation Area and Snyder's Flats. Approximately 95, 000 trees were planted in the watershed.

- The GRCA announced that its plan to protect the sources of municipal drinking water in the Grand River watershed was approved by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and will take effect July 1, 2016.
- In October, GRCA Watershed Awards were given to deserving members of the community that put their time and energy into improving the Grand River watershed.
- The former home of William Philip, the first Chair of the Grand River Conservation Commission and one of the founding members of the Grand River Conservation Authority, was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. It is located at 65 Concession Street in Cambridge.
- The Region of Waterloo's Heritage Planning Advisory Committee completed their Public Building Inventory which was conducted to increase awareness of the buildings and support future heritage conservation efforts. The inventory includes all purpose-built public buildings with an assessment of their cultural heritage value.
- GRCA installed an Osprey Cam at Belwood Lake near Fergus drawing a lot of attention of website viewers from our watershed and beyond.
- A large cover habitat enhancement project was completed in the Grand River tailwater at the mouth of Carroll Creek near Inverhaugh. The project was implemented in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) with funding from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the MNR, the Grand River Conservation Foundation, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Friends of the Grand River, as well as the Grand River Fisheries Management Plan Implementation Committee.
- GRCA staff participated in fish stocking efforts in the Grand River and Conestogo River tailwaters. Led by the MNR as well as Friends of the Grand River, approximately 40,000 brown trout yearlings were stocked.
- Snyder's Flats Management Plan was completed. The plan provides recommendations for the future management of the property and outlines existing uses, natural hazard and heritage features and issues. The plan will guide management efforts on the property for a 10-year period.
- A fisheries assessment was completed on McKenzie Creek with electrofishing being completed upstream and downstream of the Victoria Mills impoundment. Surveys were completed by GRCA staff, members from Six Nations and MNR staff.
- GRCA installed an interpretive kiosk at Luther Marsh to provide information on the Grand River headwaters area. The signage included a description of the Canadian Heritage Rivers designation.
- The Port Maitland "On the Grand" Historical Association created a cairn at Port Maitland commemorating 1) the Grand River Naval Depot at Port Maitland, 2) the area's commercial fishing history, 3) the Welland/Feeder Canal, and 4) a recent archeological assessment completed at Port Maitland.
- Grand River Access Point Standards Manual and Pilot Design Plans: In October 2015, RTOs 1, 3, and 4, with the help of BC Hughes, developed the Grand River Access Point Standards Manual & Pilot Design Plans. This guide was created to establish consistent standards for enhancing existing river access points and provide a framework for developing new ones. The manual aimed to improve wayfinding and signage, on-site

parking and drop-off routes, access into the river, and add standards for amenities such as accessible comfort stations, benches, bike and canoe racks, and waste bins.

- The City of Waterloo completed stream restoration projects in 2014/15, including the McCrae Park reach of Clair Creek and Laurel Creek downstream of Weber Street. Clair and Laurel creeks are tributaries of the Grand River.

2016

- Family Ice Fishing Days and Winter Family Fun Days were held in locations throughout the watershed. Rockwood Conservation Area allowed visitors to experience horse and wagon rides, skating, hiking, and snow shoeing.
- The Grand Strategy Heritage Working Group partnered with the City of Cambridge to host their 19th Annual Heritage Day Workshop. The theme was *Roots and Shoots: Marking the Bicentennial of the Founding of Dumfries Township 1816 – 2016*. Cultural heritage speakers provided insight into a variety of topics including First Nations history and municipal heritage initiatives.
- Thousands of trees were planted throughout the watershed by many community groups such as Brant Tree Coalition, Trees Ontario and Trees for Guelph.
- In April, high school students, local environmental leaders, teachers and provincial ministerial staff joined The Honorable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, in Brantford to learn about the environmental significance of the Grand River and the Great Lakes.
- The annual 2Rivers Festival was held in Guelph through May and June featuring a variety of natural and cultural heritage events.
- A number of Children's Water Festivals were held throughout the watershed such as the 11th annual Brantford-Brant Children's Water Festival, the Haldimand Children's Water Festival and the Waterloo-Wellington Children's Groundwater Festival.
- Two Row on the Grand was held for three days in July. Participants paddled along the Grand River from Paris to Chiefswood. The purpose of the event was to join members of native and non-native communities together and evoke the Two Row Wampum belt.
- The Region of Waterloo and City of Kitchener unveiled a new commemorative plaque to celebrate the importance of the Huron Road Bridge on July 9. The bridge spans Schneider Creek and was constructed in 1930. It is the Region's first and only example remaining of a concrete bridge constructed with visible supportive steel I-beams. The plaque traces the story of this crossing at Schneider's Creek from the construction of the Huron Road in 1828-29, to the recent rehabilitation of the bridge in 2012
- Guelph's first Heritage Conservation District (HCD), the Brooklyn and College Hill Heritage Conservation District was established in January. THE HCD designation applies to 160 properties and the area is bisected by the Speed River.
- In November, the City of Kitchener approved a Built Heritage Emergency Management policy which will now require that where a heritage property becomes unsafe from events such as fires or floods, a structural engineer must review the case before the city can proceed to demolition. In addition, the city will be required to consider heritage concerns along with public safety issues prior to demolition.
- The Grand River Tailwater Habitat Enhancement Project commenced a 2-year project to implement a third fish habitat restoration site.

- Grand River Style and Signage Guide: In 2017, the RTOs and the GRCA collaborated to create the Grand River Signage and Style Guide, aimed at establishing a consistent and uniform identity for all access points along the Grand River that would be representative of a signature outdoor recreation experience. The signage standards guide included template signs that were implemented at the Wilson's Flats pilot site in the Township of Centre Wellington.
- Friends of the Grand River stocked brown trout in the Grand River and Conestogo River tailwaters.
- Restoration and monitoring activities were conducted on Mill Creek – a tributary of the Grand River - through the Stewardship Rangers summer program.
- The Black Bridge Cultural Heritage Landscape Technical Study was completed in January. The Region of Waterloo approved Official Plan Amendment No. 15, establishing the first Cultural Heritage Landscape in Cambridge. The Black Bridge cultural heritage landscape is significant, and the landscape is connected to the industrial, agricultural, transportation, recreational, and natural history of the community and contributes to a strong sense of place.
- An assessment of current habitat conditions in the Middle Grand River began and a study to identify best alternatives for enhancing aquatic habitat opportunities was initiated.
- Broad-scale fisheries monitoring was conducted at Belwood Lake by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.
- Monitoring of re-introduced brook trout was conducted in the Grand River by the Ted Knott Chapter of Trout Unlimited Canada.
- Forest restoration activities were carried out on various GRCA properties. The total number of trees planted on GRCA lands in 2016 was almost 24,535 and resulted in the creation of 14 ha of new forest area. Volunteers took part in several tree planting events held at various locations including Dumfries Conservation Area, Snyder's Flats, Guelph Lake, Shade's Mills, Laurel Creek, Belwood Lake, and Conestogo Lake.
- Invasive species control at Dickson Wilderness Area, including 2 volunteer events
- Haldimand County completed a Tourism Strategic Action Plan that identifies the Grand River as a key strength.
- The City of Waterloo completed restoration of Forwell Creek from Blue Springs Drive to King Street.
- The City of Kitchener established a Habitat Banking Arrangement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to track additions and losses of stream habitat resulting from infrastructure projects. The City also naturalized about 1.8 km of Filsinger Creek, replacing a concrete-lined channel with a wider, naturalized channel and habitat improvements.

2017

- The Heritage Working Group partnered with the Mississaugas of the New Credit for their 20th Annual Heritage Day event. The *Historical Gathering and Heritage Day Workshop*

was held in February in Hagersville and showcased the Mississaugas of the New Credit and their contribution and role in shaping Ontario and Canada over the past 150 years.

- Doors Open Waterloo Region offered free heritage and architectural tours on September 16th.
- A number of festivals were held including the Wellesley Apple Butter & Cheese Festival, K-W Oktoberfest and the Christkindl Market in Kitchener.
- Two Row on the Grand was held in July: The canoeing event occurs annually and is a reminder of the Two Row Wampum which was a peace treaty between native and settler communities.
- The 2Rivers Festival featured 16 heritage and environmental events that included a celebration of the 120th anniversary of the Gow Bridge and the 25th anniversary of the Covered Bridge in Guelph.
- A fundraising day of biking, hiking and walking to support the Kissing Bridge Trailway, spanning Wellington, Waterloo and Perth was held on May 13th.
- Friends of the Grand River hosted The Grand Opportunities Fly Fishing Forum at Belwood Lake Park featuring fly fishing seminars and demonstrations along the banks of the Grand River. Many other fishing events were offered throughout the watershed such as the Shimano Take a Kid Fishing Day at Belwood Lake Park and the Grand River Bass Derby
- Youth Outdoors Day was held at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Grand Valley for youth ages 9 to 15. The event is designed to introduce youth to the outdoors through fun activities and interactive learning stations
- The GRCA launched Canada 150 celebrations on Earth Day at the Guelph Rotary Forest with the planting of a maple grove shaped like a maple leaf which will be visible from the sky. Each year, the Rotary club's Earth Day tree planting event sees hundreds of volunteers head out to areas near Guelph Lake Conservation Area to plant a variety of trees, working toward the project goal of planting 60,000 trees by 2020.
- Other tree planting events were also held throughout the watershed such as the 6th Annual Brantford Community Tree Planting and the Upper Grand Trailway Tree Plant.
- It was announced in August that Wellington County would be receiving funding from the federal government under the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program, to improve the Trestle Bridge Trail's pedestrian bridges. The Trestle Bridge sits high atop the Grand River and connects to the Wellington County Museum which is a national historic site.
- Development of the new Gaslight District in Galt began. The development includes adaptive reuse of old industrial buildings, previously known as "Southworks" that were first used as a machinery factory in 1859, into a commercial center and the construction of a new condominium building. It will include two residential towers, an event hall, stores, art and dining spaces and aims to be a hub for community and culture. The developer plans to preserve as much of the historical elements of the buildings as possible and aims to incorporate appreciation of the Grand River in the formation of the community.
- The Friends of the Grand and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry released 23,000 brown trout into the Grand River. The fish are released at about 30 sites between

the Shand Dam at Lake Belwood through the communities of Fergus and Elora, to the Highway 86 bridge at West Montrose. The fish have been stocked annually since 1989, and has resulted in a “world class” brown trout tailwater fishery that has had national and international attention.

- The Grand Watershed Trails Network was formally incorporated as a Not-For-Profit Corporation in December. The goal of the GWTN is to connect people with communities along with the heritage, cultural and outdoor experiences that exist throughout the Grand River Watershed by linking trails from the headwaters of the Grand to its mouth at Lake Erie.
- A Cultural Heritage Landscape Study was initiated for the townships of Woolwich and Wellesley in the Region of Waterloo. The first stage involves an inventory of heritage features and will be accomplished through public participation (surveys, interviews, etc.). The inventory is being carried out by the Heritage Resource Centre at the University of Waterloo. The City of Waterloo initiated a Cultural Heritage Landscape Study where several candidate areas will be considered for designation.
- The City of Guelph began a Cultural Heritage Action Plan to identify cultural heritage landscapes and develop actions to ensure cultural heritage resources are conserved. Approved by city council in 2021, The CHAP identified the following three candidate cultural heritage landscapes for a heritage conservation district study: Exhibition Park, St. George’s Park and the Ward West.
- As part of an archeological assessment of the project area for the new Highway 7 in Kitchener, Indigenous items were uncovered. Spearheads and food preparation items about 2,000 years old were found along the Grand River where a new bridge is to be located.
- The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry conducted broad-scale fisheries monitoring at Guelph Lake and Conestogo Lake.
- The public planning process to develop a fisheries management plan for the province’s Fisheries Management Zone 16 was launched by Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.
- A multi-agency Asian Carp Response Simulation exercise was held in Dunnville to observe the coordination of protocols of different agencies as well as demonstrating the techniques used to search for and capture Asian carp, as well as making sure emergency preparedness techniques were ready.
- The total number of trees planted on GRCA lands in 2017 was almost 24,535 and resulted in the creation of 14 ha of new forest area. Volunteers took part in several tree planting events held at various locations including Dumfries Conservation Area, Guelph Lake, Laurel Creek, Belwood Lake, Chilligo, and Conestogo Lake.
- The City of Waterloo completed restoration of Clair Creek at Coleridge Drive.

2018

- The Niska Road Bailey Bridge was removed by the 31 Combat Engineer Regiment and the Canadian Army the week of March 12th. Bailey bridges are pre-fabricated wood and steel truss structures developed by the British during the Second World War and used extensively by Allied forces. The bridge was not a designated heritage

feature, but had significant heritage importance to the community. As a result, some components of the bridge will remain with the city, which plans to repurpose them and keep them in the community.

- The City of Waterloo and the Grand Strategy Heritage Working Group hosted their 21st Annual Heritage Day workshop on February 16th, revisiting a previous theme of “Heritage Makes \$ense”. The workshop explores how cultural heritage celebrates one’s roots, strengthens community identity and has economic benefits for both individuals and communities.
- The annual 2Rivers Festival was held in Guelph in May and June. It included 24 events focused on arts, culture and indigenous knowledge related to the Speed and Eramosa Rivers – both designated Heritage Rivers and tributaries of the Grand River.
- Fly Fishing Canada’s 16th Annual National Championship was held from June 6th to 8th at Belwood Lake and included the release of 1,135 trout. An annual Conservation Symposium was held concurrently with sessions focused on conservation in the Grand River and surrounding watersheds.
- The annual Grand River Bass Derby was held on July 7th to 8th from Paris to Belwood. It is one of the longest-held bass derbies in the country. The derby is held during Ontario Family Fishing Week. Fishing licences are not required making it widely accessible.
- The annual Grand River ‘Champion of Champions’ Powwow was held in Ohsweken from July 27th to 29th. The PowWow showcased and promoted Indigenous heritage through events focused on their music, dance, arts and crafts.
- Riverfest Elora was held August 17th to 19th and included musical performances on the banks of the Grand River.
- From September 15th to 29th, Indigenous and non-Indigenous watershed residents walked the length of the Grand River from its source in Dundalk to its mouth in Haldimand. The event is intended to honour the water and connect all peoples to creation and Walk involves carrying water in a copper pail for the full length of the walk to honour the sacredness of the river.
- Doors Open events were held throughout the watershed showcasing heritage buildings and culture.
- The Grand River Fisheries Management Plan (GRFMP) celebrated its 20th Anniversary. The GRFMP Committee has been working to improve river health for two decades leading research projects and events such as river cleanups, planting events and annual fish stocking days.
- The Ministry of Tourism announced a multi-million-dollar project to improve access to the river for paddlers. The project will make the Grand River more accessible by upgrading 32 canoe access points along the river from Belwood to Port Maitland. The upgrades will include such improvements as parking, washrooms, canoe racks, picnic areas, information kiosks and signage.
- The renovated and restored Old Post Office, a designated heritage building and National Historic Site in Galt, re-opened on July 6th. It now houses high tech learning and creating spaces. It also houses Canada’s first all-digital library for every age, a restaurant and an outdoor seating area overlooking the Grand River.

- A pedestrian bridge over the Grand River opened in Galt on May 26th. It offers scenic views of the historic downtown, and increases connectivity to the river-scape and improves pedestrian and cycling connections within downtown Cambridge
- On June 29th, the Indigenous Reconciliation Youth Art Project was unveiled. The 50-foot mural in downtown Galt depicts the many historic stages of Indigenous culture in Cambridge.
- A water budget was completed for Whiteman's Creek, a popular fishing spot. The budget shows how much water enters the watershed, how it moves through and how much leaves. It is helpful in identifying areas within the watershed where water demand could be high relative to supplies and could impact fish and other biota.
- GRCA conducted park surveys designed to capture the opinions of visitors and help with improvements to facilities and recreational experiences.
- The City of Waterloo identified significant areas of cultural value in their Cultural Heritage Landscape (CHL) Inventory. The Grand River Corridor was identified as a CHL for the role it played in the formation of the city and its associative value to residents.
- The City of Cambridge initiated a Cultural Heritage District Study for the Galt area. The study will identify properties in need of heritage protection. This area of Galt is located right along the Grand River and contains historic buildings as well as a flood wall.
- The Wellington County Natural Heritage System Mapping Project was completed. The final report and mapping identifies core natural heritage areas and potential stewardship areas. Natural heritage areas include core features such as wetlands, woodlands, and aquatic habitat.
- Forest restoration activities were carried out on various GRCA properties in 2018. The total number of trees planted on GRCA lands in 2018 was almost 16,685 and if successful will lead to the restoration of 13.2 ha of forest in the watershed. Volunteers took part in several tree planting events held at various locations including Dumfries Conservation Area, Guelph Lake, Laurel Creek, Pioneer Tower and Shade's Mills.
- Signed a 20-year meadowlark habitat compensation agreement with the City of Brantford and began year-one work at Eagles Nest and Brant CA. This included tree removal, treatment of invasive vegetation, and monitoring at Birkett Lane, and treatment of invasive vegetation and monitoring at Brant CA.
- Development of a Species at Risk Act (SARA) Section 11 Conservation Agreement between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Grand River Conservation Authority. Along with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority these agreements are the first in Ontario to be developed with conservation authorities. The purpose of this agreement will support a framework within which DFO and GRCA can cooperatively ensure a coordinated and focused approach to the delivery of aquatic species at risk protection in the Grand River watershed.
- The City of Waterloo completed restoration of Colonia Creek from Lee to Castlefield.
- The City of Kitchener rehabilitated Balzer Creek, consolidating a braided channel into a meandering channel and moving it away from an exposed trunk sanitary sewer.

2019

- In February, the 22nd Annual Heritage Day Workshop was hosted by the City of Brantford the Grand Strategy Heritage Working Group. The theme of the day was “Brantford: Celebrating our Past, Building our Future” and features three discussion panel topics, including industrial history, Indigenous and military history, and cultural revolution. GRCA’s Chair, Helen Jowett opened the day with a presentation celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Heritage River designation.
- Heritage Wilmot hosted an event called “Celebrating Mills from our Past” in New Dundee in February. Historical groups and Wilmot residents provided a look-back at the numerous mills set up along the township’s streams and rivers.
- Doors Open was held in the Region of Waterloo in September and included 43 sites across the region. The focus was on water this year with some topics that relate to the Grand’s heritage river designation such as watershed management, recreation and bridges.
- The annual 2 Rivers Festival was held in Guelph in May and June. It included 25 events related to the Speed and Eramosa Rivers such as nature walks, riverside yoga and a sacred water walk.
- The All Nations Grand River Water Walk was held in June. The walk was based on the Anishinaabe ceremonial water teachings.
- The annual Grand River ‘Champion of Champions’ Powwow was held in Ohsweken in July. The PowWow showcased and promoted Indigenous heritage through events focused on their music, dance and arts and crafts.
- Riverfest Elora was held in August and included a weekend of musical performances on the banks of the Grand River.
- The Onkwehón:we Festival was held in Brantford at the Woodland Cultural Centre in June and focused on Haudenosaunee artistic and cultural themes that included dance, music, film and other expressive mediums.
- A Survivors Gathering was held in August in Brantford in recognition of those First Nations Survivors who suffered and persevered through generations of abuse, loss of language and loss of culture. The event included a healing walk from the steps of the former Mohawk Institute to the end of the lane way. It also included workshops.
- The Kissing Bridge in West Montrose, which spans the Grand River in the County of Woolwich will be featured on a new stamp from Canada Post. The bridge was opened in 1881 and is a well-known designated heritage feature.
- The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe introduced strengthened cultural heritage policies which municipalities are now considering in their official plan conformity exercises. The amended version of the plan also includes more requirements for indigenous consultation.
- The final print issue of Grand Actions was published. Originally known as a “Grand Strategy”, which supported the CHRS designation, it was published up to six times each year and focused on actions of communities and GRCA that support the river. In 2020, the GRCA plans to launch a new digital platform that will provide more timely, modern and engaging content.

- The Grand River Fisheries Management Plan Implementation Committee coordinated the stocking of fish in the Grand and Conestogo Rivers which supports recreational fishing.
- Many municipalities in the watershed commenced Cultural Heritage studies to identify properties/areas in need of protection. Examples include: the Centre Wellington and the cities of Guelph and Cambridge. Many of these studies propose to include the Grand River and its major tributaries as Cultural Heritage Landscapes.
- Along with its watershed partners, GRCA finalized a State of the Watershed Water Resources Report which outlines the collective efforts of achieving the goals that are laid out the Grand River Water Management Plan. A section of the report addresses the links between investments in best practices like wastewater treatment and stormwater management, improved the health of the river system and the increase in recreation-based use of the rivers. The Canadian Heritage River System designation is supported in the report.
- The lower part of the Grand River was assessed for invasive Asian carp during the summer, which is important to understand in order to maintain the recreational fisheries.
- Forest restoration activities were carried out on various GRCA properties in 2019. The total number of trees planted on GRCA lands in 2019 was 23,788 and if successful will lead to the restoration of 37.05 ha of forest in the watershed. Volunteers took part in tree planting events held at Guelph Lake, and Laurel Creek.
- The City of Waterloo completed restoration of parts of Maple Hill Creek.
- In 2019, the GRCA completed reconfiguration of the Elora Gorge Conservation Area campground, including addition of 50 new campsites to help provide increased overnight camping opportunities in the conservation area.

2020

- There were very few events held in 2020 due to government restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For the first time in over two decades, the Heritage Working Group did not host a workshop on Heritage Day in February.
- The Grand River Bass Derby was cancelled, but the organizers encouraged watershed residents to get out fishing in a responsible, socially distanced way.
- Some events went digital including Doors Open which offered people the chance to do virtual tours of many historic spaces in the watershed, including a tour of Shand Dam on the Grand River.
- The 2 Rivers Festival in Guelph moved their event online offering a variety of sessions to participants such as a virtual Sacred Water Walk, an Anishinaabe ceremony, and a filmed reading of The Water Walker which was inspired by the life of Josephine Mandamin.
- The annual Grand River 'Champion of Champions' Powwow was held virtually. The celebration showcases and promotes Indigenous heritage focused on their music, dance and arts and crafts.

- COVID-19 government issued restrictions limited the ability of many organizations to participate in projects in 2020. However, some previous projects concluded and project planning for future activities did occur.
- The GRCA completed subwatershed characterization reports for each of the Grand's major subwatersheds. The reports provide information and mapping on the natural heritage features and functions of each subwatershed. Reports were compiled through a comprehensive review of existing information from a variety of sources. Consultation occurred throughout the project and included workshops attended by representatives of member municipalities, provincial and federal agencies, Six Nations of the Grand River and environmental non-governmental organizations. The 11 NHS characterization reports complement other management plans compiled by the GRCA, including the Water Management Plan, Fisheries Management Plan and Forest Management Plan and support the CHRS designation.
- As part of the continued habitat restoration efforts at Taquanyah Conservation Area along the lower Grand River, approximately 12 ha of non-native invasive phragmites was treated. This multi-year project to control phragmites serves two purposes: (1) improves habitat for the endangered Virginia Mallow plant populations found on the property and (2) contributes to the longer term 'Taquanyah – The New View' restoration plan that decommissioned the reservoir and constructed wetland cells between 2004-2012.
- A draft Terms of Reference for the Wellesley Pond Enhancement Project was prepared. The document identifies four Partner Organizations: the GRCA, Township of Wellesley, Wellesley Friends of the Pond, and Wellesley Lions Club and is intended to reaffirm the goals and objectives of the project which is to improve the health and biodiversity of Wellesley Pond. The pond is located along Firella Creek, a tributary of the Nith River.
- A number of Class Environmental Assessments occurred in 2020 to assess future plans for heritage bridges. Some of these included decisions to protect the structures.
 - The Conestogo Bridge, which was built in 1886 and is one of oldest steel truss bridges in Canada is now proposed to be rehabilitated for a 15 year life extension, then closed and left in place.
 - The Winterbourne Bridge was built in 1913 and is the oldest camelback truss bridge in the area and one of three remaining truss bridges in Woolwich. The EA determined that the bridge will be closed and left in place. In the long-term, opportunities for funding will be explored to rehabilitate the bridge.
 - The Chamber's Bridge, built in 1930 and also a truss bridge was determined to be in need of removal. It may be placed elsewhere or commemorated with a plaque.
- A number of municipalities in the watershed have developed tourism plans to deal with the increase in demand from those seeking to make use of the Grand River whether for water-based activities or "insta trips". Expectations are that the demand on the river and the river-based communities will continue into 2021 since the pandemic forced changes to the way people live, work and play.
- A number of municipal heritage studies were underway in 2020 including the Galt Heritage Conservation District Study and the Wellington County Cultural Heritage Study. GRCA staff are working with the municipal heritage planners managing these projects to

incorporate the CHRS designation into their plans while also identifying flood infrastructure needs.

- Completed the final year of a five year vegetation monitoring for the bobolink compensation project at the Morton Property. In 2016 the GRCA had been asked to enter into an agreement with a private developer to facilitate habitat compensation for Bobolinks relating to provisions of the Endangered Species Act.
- RTO4 with the City of Kitchener, GRCA and other partners, completed improvements at the Idlewood Creek river access point in the City of Kitchener.
- The City of Waterloo completed stream restoration for Laurel Creek through Waterloo Park.

2021

- The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in limited opportunities for major planned events in 2021.
- The Grand River Bass Derby was cancelled again in 2021, but the organizers encouraged watershed residents to get out fishing in a responsible, socially distanced way.
- Doors Open went digital again and offered people the chance for people to explore a number of heritage buildings such as the Cold War bunker along the Grand River in Kitchener and the North House at Rare Charitable Research Reserve in Blair along the Speed River.
- The 2 Rivers Festival in Guelph offered both online and in person events in 2021, providing a variety of sessions to participants such as a Sacred Water Walk (an Anishinaabe ceremony), a Medicinal Plant Walk, yoga sessions and historical walking tours.
- The annual Grand River 'Champion of Champions' Powwow was cancelled in 2021. In prior years, the event showcased and promoted Indigenous heritage focused on their music, dance and arts and crafts.
- The Grand River Float Day offered hundreds of people a chance to float down the Grand River tied together on inflatables.
- COVID-19 limited the ability of many organizations/groups to participate in projects again in 2021.
- A number of Class Environmental Assessments occurred in 2021 to assess future plans for heritage bridges. Some of these included decisions to protect the structures.
- It was decided that the Winterbourne Bridge in Woolwich will be rehabilitated and converted to a pedestrian/cyclists only bridge.
- GRCA conservation areas opened up fully in 2021 allowing for many recreational activities to resume.
- The increase in river-based tourism continued in 2021 at a higher rate than pre-pandemic. Some municipalities had to make infrastructure changes (changes to traffic, parking and river access points) and post signage to deal with the influx.
- Two areas (11.6ha) on GRCA land near Guelph Lake were reforested in spring 2021. A nearby section (4.3 ha) of Guelph Lake Rotary forest was planted with 6800 seedlings.

- As part of the early detection and control efforts for invasive phragmites at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, a headwaters area of the Grand River, two days of treatments targeted existing patches of invasive phragmites and surveillance for new patches is ongoing.
- Five days of freshwater mussel sampling were carried out on Grand River tributaries including the Speed River, Whiteman's Creek, Fairchild Creek, Laurel Creek, Hopewell Creek and D'Aubigny Creek. A total of 12 species were identified including one aquatic species at risk.
- The Wellington County Cultural Heritage Study was completed and Council recently directed staff to proceed with an Official Plan Amendment to identify a total of 18 significant CHLs, some of which are located along the Grand River. GRCA staff are working with the municipal heritage planners managing these types of projects to incorporate the CHRS designation into their plans while also identifying flood infrastructure needs.
- Virtual Open Houses were held to engage the public on the Cultural Heritage Landscape Study in Wilmot and North Dumfries Townships.
- Conifer plantation thinning completed at three properties, totaling 50 hectares. A 5-year forecast to guide plantation management on GRCA lands has been prepared. GRCA's primary objective in thinning plantations is to promote the conversion of these planted forests toward more diverse and structurally complex forests. This both improves habitat quality and the resilience of these forests to impacts from insects, diseases and climate change.
- Planting of over 18,000 trees and shrubs, in areas totaling 12ha, on GRCA properties to support watershed reforestation.
- Aerial applications of Btk insecticide for control of LDD (*Lymantria dispar dispar*) moth were coordinated for portions of Pinehurst and Brant Conservation Areas – 70 ha total;
- A RFQ process was developed to support grassland habitat vegetation management at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area and Guelph Lake Conservation Area, enabling 35ha of field cutting/woody shrub control and 11ha of herbicide treatment this year;
- GRCA's Natural Heritage department finalized the internal document Guidance for Reducing Risks to Migratory Birds during Vegetation Management Operations. This guidance provides mitigation measures for reducing risks to migratory birds that could potentially occur during grass mowing and trail maintenance activities on GRCA lands.
- The City of Waterloo completed stream restoration for Laurel Creek from Regina Street to Weber Street.
- In 2021, the GRCA's Shade's Mills Conservation Area introduced a boat concessionaire that provides canoe, kayak and stand-up paddle board rentals, leading to increased capacity to offer water-based recreation services.
- The City of Kitchener rehabilitated Shoemaker Creek, replacing concrete channel with a naturalized channel and habitat improvements.

2022

- After multiple years of delayed events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Grand River Conservation Areas were able to operate at full capacity in 2022, offering camping, hiking, paddling, fishing and other outdoor recreation activities; and hosted a wide-range of community, school and fundraising events.
- Guelph Lake Conservation Area hosted the annual Hillside festival in July of 2022; at full capacity for the first time in two years, celebrating cultural music, diversity, and geography.
- After a two-year hiatus, The Belwood Lions Club hosted the 40th annual Pike Derby at Belwood Lake Conservation Area for local and out-of-town anglers.
- 6 Conservation Areas were able to offer boat rentals in 2023 including canoe, kayak, stand up paddleboards and peddle boats, providing water sport activities within the reservoirs and along the Grand River.
- Doors Open events were held virtually within the Grand River watershed, featuring the Elora Gorge, 6 sites in Guelph and 34 sites in the Region of Waterloo. These included the historic Blair Sheave Tower, the Brubacher House Museum, and the Canadian Pacific Railway Caboose.
- Six Nations of the Grand River offered virtual tours of the Woodland Cultural Centre, the site of the Mohawk Institute, a former residential school that operated from 1885 to 1970. The tour provided the history of the institution over its 140 year history. Viewers will get to see the different rooms in the school, from the girls' and boys' dormitories, the cafeteria, laundry room, and other rooms throughout the building, as well as hear interviews from five Survivors of the Mohawk Institute.
- The 2 Rivers Festival in Guelph offered both online and in person events in 2022, providing a variety of sessions to participants such as a Medicinal Plant Walk, a Getting to Know your Treaty Partner event, and a 2 Rivers BIPOC Paddle.
- The annual Grand River 'Champion of Champions' Powwow resumed in 2022 after a 2-year hiatus. The event moved to the Ohsweken Speedway and showcased and promoted Indigenous heritage focused on music, dance, and arts and crafts.
- The GRCA undertook erosion control along the Eramosa River through Rockwood Conservation Area to prevent further erosion hazards. The boat launch area at Rockwood Conservation Area was upgraded, featuring a new assisted canoe and kayak launch as well as shoreline improvements to help prevent further erosion. Docks and canoe launches were installed in new locations at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management.
- The Elora Cataract Rail Trail pilot project improved the conditions of the Elora Cataract Trail and increased hikers' scenic appreciation and experience. This trail connects the historic town of Elora, through the community of Fergus and past Belwood Lake.
- GRCA improved trail accessibility on the Rotary Club Trail along the Speed River between Victoria Road North and the Guelph Lake Dam.
- The Township of Woolwich partnered with the West Montrose Family Camp and RTO4 to create a new river access point in West Montrose.
- 2022 saw the return of GRCA's Mill Creek Rangers, a high school and university work and enrichment program. For over 20 years, this program has focused on improving Mill

Creek, a tributary of the Grand River, and providing aquatic restoration experience to its participants. This year, the crew dismantled 4 beaver dams, built seven flow deflectors, and cleared over 1000m of stream channel of fallen trees and accumulated woody debris and assisted with freshwater mussel surveys on the Speed River and Fairchild Creek and bathymetry work on Victoria Mill Pond reservoir.

- The stocking of fish to support recreational fishing in the Grand and Conestogo Rivers, and other locations, continues to be implemented by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry with the assistance of GRCA staff.
- This was the final year of tree planting at the Guelph Lake Rotary Forest, a 14 year partnership with the Rotary Club of Guelph which established 40 ha of forest near Guelph Lake. This was a forest planted completely “by the community, for the community.”
- Four days of freshwater mussel sampling were carried out by GRCA on Grand River tributaries including the Speed River, Fairchild Creek and Rogers Creek. A total of 15 species were identified including 3 species at risk.
- The Grand River Bass Derby event was discontinued. However, funds raised from the Derby are currently being used to help develop and improve public access points along the Grand River.
- The City of Cambridge’s Galt Core Heritage Conservation District Plan development began. The study area included lands along the Grand River through the City’s downtown. It identified heritage assets and includes policies for their conservation including features, structures and streetscapes that represented Galt’s history as a key industrial centre on the Grand River corridor and Grand Trunk Railway network.
- A Cultural Heritage Landscape (CHL) Study conducted by Centre Wellington is still ongoing. The study area is located along the Grand River and in 2022, identified 18 significant CHLs for designation. The next phase of this project (2023) is to formally recognize these in the Township’s Official Plan.
- The Bridge Street bridge has been evaluated by the Township of Wilmot through a Schedule B Class EA. The bridge is being replaced and the municipality plans to relocate it pending determination of a suitable site. The bridge is a steel Pratt camelback through truss and was built in 1913. It crosses over the Nith River and is listed in the Grand River Watershed Heritage Bridge Inventory.
- The “Kissing Bridge” in Woolwich is a covered, timber bridge with steel reinforcement. It was built in 1881 crossing the Grand River and is designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. It is a popular destination for tourists and heritage enthusiasts. Plans for rehabilitation are being evaluated by the Township and Region of Waterloo.
- The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) initiated development of new plans and strategies required by the Conservation Authorities Act, including a Conservation Area Strategy that will inform the Authority’s decision making related to the lands it owns and controls. Also under development are natural hazard asset management and operational plans, and a watershed resource management strategy. These new plans may influence GRCA’s management of lands that are used for recreation and how communities are protected from flooding.

- The GRCA is updating its Strategic Plan to include a new priority: Enhancing Indigenous awareness, understanding and relationships. As these relationships evolve, there may be new opportunities to celebrate the Indigenous heritage of the Grand River watershed.
- GRCA has initiated the Bridgeport Dyke Rehabilitation and Capacity Improvement Class Environmental Assessment to explore options to rehabilitate the existing Bridgeport Dyke. The community of Bridgeport is located along the bend of the Grand River in the City of Kitchener. The former village has a history of flooding, with serious flooding reported in 1948, 1954 and 1974, when the 1950s-era earth fill dike was overtopped. The current dyke protects a mix of recreational, residential, commercial, and industrial lands. Adaptation to flooding is one of the outstanding human heritage values of the Grand River watershed.
- GRCA has initiated flood damage assessment studies for Grand Valley, Waldemar and Drayton. These three communities are high-risk flood damage centres, with historic development in the floodplain. Adaptation to flooding is one of the outstanding human heritage values of the Grand River watershed.
- The GRCA conducted a hunting review of GRCA-owned lands included in the recreational hunting program which resulted in the addition of 186 acres to the program, creating increased opportunities for local and out-of-town hunters.
- The Survivor's Secretariat is working to uncover, document and share the truth about the Mohawk Institute, an Indian Residential School located in Brantford. The Survivors' Secretariat is a Survivor-led initiative established in 2021. The Secretariat coordinates protocols and processes associated with death investigations and facilitates the gathering of community and Survivor statements as they work to document and share the truth about what happened at the Mohawk Institute during its 136 years of operation.
- Conifer plantation thinning completed at six properties, totaling 126 hectares;
- Ongoing control of *Phragmites australis* at Luther Marsh, including the first year of over-water treatments on difficult to access patches on the main reservoir and first and follow-up treatments on 28 patches spread across Luther's core properties;
- 34 hectares of shrubland habitat north of Wellington County Road 15 were mowed to increase the amount of grassland habitat at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area;
- 1.5 hectares of shrubland and 190 metres of hedgerow habitat containing invasive, dead, or decaying vegetation were mowed to augment the overall size and connectivity of existing grassland areas near Damascus Reservoir;
- Natural Heritage staff worked with Guelph Lake Nature Centre staff and three local school classes to plant 100 two-gallon pots of native tallgrass plants to improve plant diversity at a grassland at Guelph Lake Conservation Area. This activity was part of a two-year grassland enhancement project at Guelph Lake CA and was funded by Forest Ontario's Grassland Stewardship Initiative.
- The Grand River Community Play Project is an inclusive community play aiming to connect people up and down the river with each other and the Grand River. Two story telling events were held in 2022 in Waterloo and Ohsweken.
- The Grand Watershed Trails Network launched a new website (www.grandtrails.ca) to help cyclists, hikers, paddlers and tourists better plan their trips. The maps show river access points and link to local attractions and businesses.

- The City of Kitchener rehabilitated Montgomery Creek, creating a wider, meandering channel with stream flow, erosion, and habitat benefits.

2023

- Digital Doors Open events were held in Elora, Fergus, Guelph, and Waterloo Region.
- The GRCA hosted a workshop in Glen Morris to assist rural landowners with forest management.
- Three days of freshwater mussel sampling were carried out by the GRCA on Grand River tributaries including the Nith River and Fairchild Creek. Two species at risk were identified.
- Conestogo Lake Conservation Area hosted a Kids, Cops Fishing Derby July 22, 2023 – Wellington OPP and MNRF partnered to create a fun educational experience with prizes awarded for catch and release fish.
- Lansdowne Children Centre hosted the annual fundraiser Walk and Roll for supporting children with disabilities at the Brant Conservation Area
- The stocking of fish to support recreational fishing in the Grand and Conestogo Rivers, and other locations, continues to be implemented by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry with the assistance of the GRCA's staff.
- The GRCA hosted a community tree planting event at Brant Conservation Area in partnership with the City of Brantford and the Brant Tree Coalition. One hectare of the park was naturalized with the help of 400 community members who planted 1100 trees and shrubs.
- An additional 4 hectare of forest was established on GRCA lands near Luther Marsh and Everton. The GRCA thinned 114 hectares of forest conifer plantations on its properties to speed its conversion to more diverse and resilient forests.
- The TH&B Bridge Public Art Project was completed in Brantford. 150 volunteers, including schools, community organizations, small groups, and other talented individuals, participated by submitting and painting unique designs on the bridge's interior panels, contributing to a giant community-developed mural depicting local history, culture, destinations, events, and people.
- Some municipalities are reviewing properties listed on municipal heritage registers that have not yet been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. Changes to the Act by Bill 23 requires the de-listing of these properties from the Register if not designated by January 1, 2025. Some municipal conservation district studies were paused while municipalities reviewed changing provincial direction.
- The City of Cambridge initiated the Hespeler Heritage Conservation District Study. The study includes the Speed River and Mill Pond.
- The City of Guelph completed the first phase of the Ontario Reformatory Heritage Conservation District Study. The Phase 1 Study provides an assessment of the historical, design and contextual value of the study area, identifies contributing and non-contributing properties and resources, provides a character analysis and statement of cultural heritage value or interest and delineates a boundary for the proposed district.
- The City of Guelph has initiated the first phase of the Downtown Guelph Heritage Conservation District Study and formed a Downtown Guelph Heritage Focus Group.

- The GRCA provided access to its properties to 26 groups for scientific research and monitoring. This includes government agencies, post-secondary institutions, consultants, environmental organizations, and individuals. The topics of the studies are widely varied, from monitoring for black-legged ticks through water quality and climate change studies.
- The GRCA prepared a draft Management Plan for the Niska Land Holdings in 2023. Niska is approximately 65 hectares of forests, wetlands, meadows and agricultural fields and is the convergence of where Hanlon Creek flows into the Speed River.
- The GRCA continues to advance the Bridgeport Dyke Rehabilitation and Capacity Improvement Class Environmental Assessment to explore options to rehabilitate the existing Bridgeport Dyke. The study area includes the Bridgeport Bridge which is designated as a heritage bridge.
- A State of the Watershed Report Card was prepared by the GRCA using internal data along with data from provincial, federal, and local partnerships. A webpage was created to summarize the findings.
- The Six Nations Wildlife and Stewardship Office surveyed community members to learn about priorities, attitudes, and activities related to fisheries and fish consumption in priority water bodies, including the Grand River.
- RTO4 partnered with the Friends of the Grand, Wellington County and the Township of Centre Wellington to have the New Fly Fisher highlight the Brown Trout Fishery success story. The episode launched December 2023⁸.
- The Grand River Community Play Project continued collaborative storytelling about the Grand River through a Quilt Workshop and story circles held in St Jacobs, Cambridge, and Brantford.
- The City of Brantford held Culture Days on the Trails in September, hosting 10 mini performances along a stretch of the Grand River between Hardy Road and Lafayette Avenue. About 600 people attended.
- Children's Water/Groundwater Festivals were held in Wellington County, City of Brantford, and Haldimand County, engaging about 6,500 students from grades 2-5 and about 1,000 volunteers in learning about water, groundwater, aquatic ecosystems and water conservation.
- RTO4, the City of Cambridge, the GRCA and other partners completed improvements to the river access point at the Cambridge to Paris Rail Trailhead in the City of Cambridge.
- Tom Ostapchuk created the short film *The Grand: From source to mouth*, documenting his self supported source to mouth kayak trip down the Grand River. The film was an official selection for the Paddling Film Festival World Tour, the Waterwalker Film Festival, and the Forest City Film Festival. [The Grand - Source to mouth self-supported](#)
- The City of Waterloo completed restoration of a short reach of Colonial Creek at 454 Malabar

2024

- The GRCA developed updated plans and strategies to guide management of the Grand River watershed, including: a Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy, a

⁸ [Grand River Trophy Brown Trout | A Success Story](#)

Conservation Areas Strategy (CAS) , an updated Reservoir Operations Policy, a Water Control Structure Asset Management Plan, and an Ice Management Plan. The CAS identifies maintenance of the Canadian Heritage River designation as an action.

- The City of Waterloo produced a Heritage Designation and Evaluation Report in response to recent changes to the Ontario Heritage Act. The report identifies 40 properties as having potential cultural heritage value or interest under Ontario Regulation 9/06.
- The City of Brantford completed design work and anticipates construction of a new superstructure for Brant's Crossing bridge. The bridge over the Grand River was originally built in 1975 for railway traffic, was converted to a pedestrian and cycling bridge in 1996, and was damaged during an ice jam event in 2018. A municipal class environmental assessment was completed in 2022.
- A group of Regional Tourism Organizations and municipal and other partners held the Grand River Forum, a day-long meeting held by the river in Caledonia to share updates from the RTOs on Grand River-related projects and experience performances from musician Lacey Hill and the Grand River Community Play Project. The Grand River Forum was held in 2019 in Cambridge and 2022 in Brantford.
- The Grand River Water Walk was held September 15-21, 2024. Indigenous-led Grand River Ceremonies were held monthly throughout the year at locations including Schneider Park and Pioneer Tower Natural Area in Kitchener.
- The Ohneganos water research program, with Six Nations of the Grand River, Dr. Mark Servos from the University of Waterloo, and other partners, completed a study of water quality and temperature, and fish and macroinvertebrate communities in McKenzie and Boston creeks. This milestone study revisited sites in the Six Nations territory last sampled in the 1980s.
- Brant County completed an Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy. A survey in support of the strategy found that 95% of respondents said the Grand River and natural heritage are the most important theme that shapes Brant's identity. The strategies objectives reflect the important of recreational and cultural activities along the Nith and Grand rivers.
- The Grand River Community Play Project continued collaborative storytelling about the Grand River through seasonal themed events held in Guelph at the Hillside Festival, Brantford, Dunnville, Six Nations, and Cambridge.
- The Regional Municipality of Waterloo completed a municipal class environmental assessment for the rehabilitation of the West Montrose Covered Bridge. Known as the "Kissing Bridge", it was originally constructed in 1881. Construction is expected to begin in 2025.
- *Currents of Change: Inspiring Action along the Grand River*, a new exhibit that opened at the Regional Municipality of Waterloo's McDougall Cottage Historic Site in May 2024. Through a blend of history, ecology, and Indigenous and settler narratives, this captivating exhibit examines the profound and dynamic connection between the Grand River, the City of Cambridge's heritage, and our collective future. The exhibit was accompanied by the *Grand Inspirations Art Contest* that invited artists of all media to submit a work that expresses their unique connection to the Grand River. Forty-one entries were received and winning entries were selected by public voting and displayed as part of the Currents of Change exhibit. McDougall Cottage also hosted a "Get to

Know the Grand" Summer Scavenger Hunt and education programming for school aged students.

- River Heritage Festival: This festival held on September 22, 2024, at the GRCA's Brant Conservation Area celebrated the river with exhibits from 17 parties, including the Conservation Authority, local municipalities, First Nations, and non-governmental arts, recreation, environmental, and cultural organizations. A couple of hundred people participated and there were opportunities to bike, hike, and paddle on the river.
- Many other public and private sector events acknowledged the 30th anniversary and included celebration of the River's heritage, including the interactive Voice of the River: The Grand River Community Play Project at the annual Hillside Festival on the Speed River at Guelph Lake Conservation Area, the Bikes and Blues Festival held by Water Cycles in Elora, special promotions by outfitter Grand River Rafting, and a River Talks lecture series held by Grand River Dinner Cruises and Six Nations Tourism.
- The Cambridge Fire Hall Museum & Education Centre and its partners created The Great Flood of '74 - Cambridge's Watershed Moment. The event engaged over 1,000 participants in exhibits, walking tours, local businesses, presentations, videos, and interviews. The community will continue to benefit from the events as pictures, scrap books, oral histories and other materials are collected and donated to local archives for posterity.
- Haldimand County initiated a development of a Lower Grand River Visitor Experience Strategy.
- The City of Brantford held Culture Days on the Trails in September, hosting 10 mini performances along a stretch of the Grand River between Hardy Road and Lafayette Avenue.
- Grand Experiences, a provider of guided interpretive paddling tours of the Grand River is working with Brantford and Six Nations to develop a Great Canadians Tour of the Grand, highlighting famous figures such as artist Lawren Harris and poet Pauline Johnson.
- Grand River Rafting developed a new paddling route for the lower Grand River from York to Cayuga, named Steamboat Alley in recognition of the historical development of locks and canals for steamship passage by the Grand River Navigation Company.
- Water Cycles, an initiative that connects communities with water through cycling, held a Bikes and Blues Festival in Elora/Fergus on August 24, 2024, and volunteer-run bike rides in Waterloo, Elora, Fergus, and Luther Marsh.
- Two Row on the Grand: This event, held annually since 2016, is a 10-day canoe trip on the Grand River where Indigenous and Non-Indigenous participants build mutual respect and understanding of values and culture through the shared experience. The canoe trip is a physical embodiment of the Two Row Wampum, the original peace treaty between Indigenous and settler communities. In 2024 the Two Row experience became a credit course for McMaster university students.
- Six Nations Stewardship held an insectivore bird count along the river and its banks during the summer of 2024 – for the second year in a row.
- Children's Water/Groundwater Festivals were held in Wellington County and City of Brantford, engaging about 6,500 students from grades 2-5 and about 1,000 volunteers in learning about water, groundwater, aquatic ecosystems and water conservation.

- The City of Waterloo completed restoration of a reach of Laurel Creek through Hillside Park.
- The City of Kitchener completed an environmental assessment for stream naturalization near the confluence of Schneider and Shoemaker Creeks.
- Through the GRCA's conservation services program, 270 projects were implemented by rural landowners to improve water quality and watershed health, supported by cost-share grants from municipalities and federal funding. Additionally, over 140,000 trees were planted through the GRCA's private land tree planting program and community tree planting events.

Appendix C: Workshop Participants

Arash Ghomlaghi, University of Waterloo

Chinonso Chris-Emenyonu, University of Waterloo

Rayden Laliberte, University of Waterloo

Bryan Tolson, University of Waterloo

Lauren McElroy, University of Waterloo

Jane Mah Hutton, University of Waterloo

Will Rauch-Davis, University of Waterloo

Scarlett van Berkel, University of Waterloo

Carissa MacKenzie, University of Waterloo

Andrii Kramarenko, University of Waterloo

Amy Lacey, University of Waterloo

Madeline Tucker, University of Waterloo

Thomas Odland, University of Waterloo

Alexa Holder, University of Waterloo

Diana Pena, University of Waterloo

Noelle Starling, University of Waterloo

Camila Granito, University of Waterloo

Bruce MacVicar, University of Waterloo

Leo Wu, University of Waterloo

Joseph Wortman, University of Waterloo

Vani Goel, University of Waterloo

Leah Jones-Crank, University of Waterloo

Favour Ozordi, University of Waterloo

Jordana Polera, University of Waterloo

Dustin Garrick, University of Waterloo, CWP Director

Daylon Gee, Six Nations of the Grand River

Lauren Vanderlingen, Six Nations of the Grand River Elected Council

Steve Shikaze, Hydrogeologist

Anne Crowe, Grand Watershed Trails Network

Dan Mckay, Grand Watershed Trails Network

Ellie Joseph, Two Row on the Grand

Jay Bailey, Two Row on the Grand

Lisa Rafferty, Brant Waterways Foundation

Barb Veale, Conservation Halton

Patricia Gillis, Environment and Climate Change Canada

Jack Imhoff, Trout Unlimited

Tony Zammit, Grand River Conservation Authority

Mark Anderson, Grand River Conservation Authority

Janet Ivey, Grand River Conservation Authority

Anthony Kelly, Grand Valley Trails Association

Allan Bennett, Grand Valley Trails Association

Ray Martin, Fire Hall Museum & Education Centre

Peter Smith, Canadian Centre for Rural Creativity

Tristin Vogel, Regional Tourism Organization 4

Appendix D: Changes and Threats to Natural, Cultural and Recreational Values

Natural Heritage Values

Hydrology

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Drainage Basins	The Grand River Basin is nested within and represents 10% of the Lake Erie Basin.	None			
Seasonal Variation	Flood flows in the main Grand River are influenced mostly by the Shand and Conestogo dams and to a lesser extent the Guelph Dam. The Nith, Whiteman's and Mackenzie Creek flows are not regulated and experience a large range of flows.	Analysis of historical climate and stream flow show a trend towards warmer winters with more frequent snowmelt events, and smaller spring freshets.	Flows in the Grand River continue to be subject to seasonal variation and the frequency and magnitude of flood and low water events may be influenced by climate change. During the past decade, the Grand River experienced a few notable flood events, including a March 2021 snowmelt event, a February 2018 ice jam event, and high rainfall events in June 2017, January 2020, and September 2021. At the other extreme, Level 1 low water conditions (under the Ontario Low Water Response program) were declared for at least part of the watershed in 8 of the last 11 years. Level 2 conditions were declared for at least part of the watershed in 2015, 2016, 2020, and 2022.	The GRCA's major reservoirs are used to reduce downstream flooding. In 2024, the GRCA updated the Reservoir Operations Policy and completed an Ice Management Plan. A flood damage study was completed for New Hamburg (2020) and studies are underway for Grand Valley, Waldemar, Drayton, and Bridgeport. Level 1 low water conditions result in a request for a voluntary 10 per cent reduction in water consumption by all water users, including municipalities, aggregate operations, golf courses, water bottlers, farms for irrigation and private users. Level 2 results in a request for a voluntary 20 per cent reduction in water consumption by all water users.	Yes
Water Content	In general, total suspended solids (TSS) appear to be low throughout the upper and middle Grand River reaches when compared to the lower Grand River. The significant increase in suspended solids concentrations is seen between Glen Morris and Newport Bridge below Brantford is likely due to the southern clay plain within which the river begins to flow. Another potential source of TSS to the Grand River is the Nith, given its higher concentrations than the Grand River at Glen Morris and its identification as the second highest TSS load when compared to all other major tributaries. Source: GRCA, 2006. ⁹	None			

⁹ Cooke. S. 2006. Water quality in the Grand River: a summary of current conditions (2000-2004) and long term trends. Grand River Conservation Authority.

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
River Size	The Grand River is approximately 290 km long and with its 4 major tributaries, the Nith, Conestogo, Eramosa and Speed it totals 627 km.	None			

Physiography

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Physiographic Regions	The Grand River is located within the St Lawrence Lowlands physiographic region. Three distinct areas – Dundalk and Stratford Till Plains in the north and west, the Horseshoe Moraines in the central and east parts of the watershed and the Haldimand Clay Plain in the south.	None			
Geological Processes	Bedrock formations generally outcrop or subcrop in long parallel bands of varying width, aligned in a north-west to southeast direction. The bedrock subcropping within the watershed consists of Ordovician to Devonian-aged sedimentary rocks, deposited in a marine environment that existed in the area between 345 to 370 million years ago. In total, there are 11 different bedrock formations outcropping or subcropping within the Grand River watershed, all of which were initially deposited horizontally. Regionally, they now dip approximately 2 degrees to the west as a result of subsequent structural deformation (Lake Erie Source Protection Region Technical Team, 2008).	None			
Hydrogeology	Varied hydrologic conditions exist throughout the watershed. The northern portion of the watershed is largely comprised of till plain characterized by high surface runoff and very little ground infiltration. The central portion contains most of the watershed's moraines and sand/gravel deposits left by glaciation. Due of the significant amount of pervious material and the lack of a well-defined drainage network, this area is characterized by extremely high infiltration and relatively low surface runoff. The southern portion of the watershed is dominated by the Haldimand Clay Plain which produces very high surface runoff with little to no infiltration.	Reduced infiltration of precipitation and groundwater recharge in localized areas.	Expansion of impermeable surfaces through urbanization (e.g., more extensive paved areas).	Some municipal water supply aquifers have been identified as vulnerable to groundwater recharge reduction and overconsumption, including wells providing supply to the Region of Waterloo, City of Guelph, Township of Centre Wellington, Township of Guelph/Eramosa, and Brant County. Policies to protect groundwater recharge for vulnerable municipal water supply sources are being developed and implemented under the Grand River Source Protection Plan. Some municipalities encourage infiltration of stormwater (where appropriate) through implementation of stormwater management master plans and policies.	Yes
Topography	Surface elevation in the watershed ranges from 173 metres above sea level at the mouth of the Grand River on Lake Erie, to 535 metres above sea level in the northern headwaters.	None			

River Morphology

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Valley Types	Typical of most river valleys, the Grand River is V-shaped.	None			
Channel Types	The river exhibits a dendritic pattern. It is meandering and wide in some areas and straighter with steep slopes in others. The central part of the river exhibits more meandering than the areas to the south towards its mouth. Historically, watercourses were commonly straightened, hardened or buried in urban areas and straightened, dredged or removed in rural areas for farming.	Over the last decade, there has been some limited restoration of watercourses using natural channel design and improvement of riparian plantings in rural areas.	City of Kitchener is implementing the recommendations of its Integrated Stormwater Management Master Plan (2016), including naturalization and restoration of some urban tributaries to the central Grand River. Stewardship programs such as the GRCA's Rural Water Quality Program offer financial assistance to landowners to restore and protect watercourses through riparian plantings and the establishment of best management practices.		Yes, restoration and naturalization work is ongoing.
Channel Profile	Confined and unconfined slopes are exhibited on the river and its tributaries. Steep slopes can be seen in areas such as the Elora Gorge and flatter areas towards the mouth of the river. Levees and dams are located along the river at multiple locations.	None			
Fluvial Landforms	The river and its tributaries display a variety of fluvial landforms such as waterfalls, gullies, levees, floodplains, pools, riffles, point bars, islands and ox-bow lakes.	None			

Biotic Environments

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Aquatic Ecosystems	Cold water tributaries are typically situated within areas underlain by appropriate surficial geology (sand and gravelly substrates) and are fed by large amounts of groundwater. These tributaries support cold water species such as brook trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, and mottled sculpin. Warm water tributaries situated on clayey to silty/clayey till plains and low moraines provide very low baseflows. Flows along these reaches can be permanent, intermittent, or ephemeral. Fish communities tend to be dominated by a mix of warm water fish species.	Aquatic ecosystems continue to be impacted by intensive agricultural practices, urban drainage, and spread of invasive species (e.g., Round goby, Asian carp, Sea lamprey, Rusty crayfish, Zebra mussels). Climate change may pose an added threat by impacting the hydrologic cycle and stream temperatures, affecting habitat for aquatic life. Over the last decade, there has been some limited restoration of aquatic ecosystems in rural and urban areas.	Many stewards work to restore and enhance aquatic ecosystems in the Grand River watershed, including municipalities, private landowners, the GRCA, and non-governmental organizations, such as Trout Unlimited. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Kitchener has rehabilitated or naturalized about 4.3 km of creeks over the past decade. Projects included removing concrete-lined channels, widening and naturalizing watercourses, and improving aquatic habitat. These projects produce a range of benefits from healthier ecosystems to more climate resilient urban communities. The City of Waterloo has completed an average of 1 creek rehabilitation/restoration project every 		Yes, aquatic ecosystems continue to be impacted by urban and rural land use practices, invasive species and climate change. Restoration work is ongoing. Over the last half of the decade, active implementation of the Grand River Fisheries Management Plan has slowed, in part due to changes to the GRCA's coordinating role as a result of amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act. While restoration work continues, the interagency coordinating mechanism is not as strong.

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
			<p>year over the past decade. These projects have included bank stabilization measures, reconfiguration where required, restoration and rehabilitation of corridor features such as wildlife sanctuary, wetland protection and public active transportation routes. The City continues to prioritize creek work through its environmental studies and updates to the Stormwater Management Master Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mill Creek Stewardship Rangers Program rehabilitated > 1 km of Mill Creek and removed beaver dams to improve fish passage (Cambridge). • In 2023 & 2024 the GRCA, with support from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), surveyed twenty unclassified municipal drains, assessing flow conditions and fish and benthic macroinvertebrate communities. <p>Options for future improvements to aquatic ecosystem of the southern Grand River were considered through the work of the multi-agency Southern Grand River Ecosystem Rehabilitation Working Group, co-led by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and Climate Change Canada. This work culminated in workshops and a synthesis report that proposed a path for ecosystem rehabilitation in the lower reaches of the river.</p>		<p>Limited fish community information is available at the watershed scale to inform aquatic ecosystem management. The GRCA undertakes some fish community monitoring to support subwatershed planning in tributaries of the urbanizing central watershed.</p>
Terrestrial Ecosystems	<p>The Grand River watershed spans two major ecoregions in Ontario, namely the Great Lake- St. Lawrence Forest Zone in the north and the Carolinian Forest Zone in the south. The Carolinian Forest exhibits unique characteristics not seen in other areas of Canada. It comprises only 1% of the country's total area, but it contains more plant and animal species than any other ecosystem in Canada (Carolinian Canada, 1994). Approximately 19% of the watershed is forested, 10% is covered in wetland, and 0.01% is remnant tallgrass prairie habitat.</p>	<p>Terrestrial ecosystems continue to be impacted by intensive agricultural practices, urbanization, and spread of invasive species (e.g., Purple loosestrife, Giant hogweed, buckthorns, garlic mustard, emerald ash borer). Climate change may pose an added threat by impacting the hydrologic cycle and air temperatures, affecting habitat for terrestrial life.</p> <p>Emerald ash borer (EAB) has had significant impacts on tree cover and forest diversity over the past decade. Most areas of the watershed have now lost most ash trees over 20 cm in diameter. This has especially impacted young and previously disturbed forests</p>	<p>Many stewards work to restore and enhance terrestrial ecosystems in the Grand River watershed, including municipalities, private landowners, the GRCA, and non-governmental organizations, such as Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC).</p> <p>DUC has a long history of restoring and conserving wetlands within the Grand River watershed, with most of these projects being delivered through DUC's small wetland restoration and large wetland rebuild programs in partnership with private landowners. Since 2014 DUC has restored a total 710 acres of wetland habitat, through 115 individual projects. In addition, DUC has secured 1910 acres of existing uplands and 960 acres of existing wetlands through the use of private conservation agreements to ensure that these crucial habitats remain on the landscape.</p>		<p>Yes, terrestrial ecosystems continue to be impacted by the spread of invasive species, intensive agricultural practices, and urbanization. The impacts of climate change are a growing concern.</p> <p>Over the last decade there have been changes to the roles, responsibilities and processes for consideration of natural heritage matters in land use planning decisions. In 2022, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry updated the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System. Concerns have been raised that changes to the process for wetland evaluations and complexing may reduce protections for some wetlands from future development. Replacement of the Growth Plan for the</p>

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
		<p>where ash was often the predominant tree species. It also especially impacted hedge rows and the urban forest. Significant changes to overall forest composition have been caused by EAB.</p> <p>Over the last decade, there has been some limited restoration of terrestrial ecosystems in rural and urban areas.</p>	<p>Since 2014 the GRCA has facilitated planting of 983,000 trees on private land. These tree planting projects include retirement of 560 ha of marginal agricultural lands, establishment of 188 km of windbreaks and 72 km of watercourse buffer. The GRCA worked with private landowners to establish an additional 20 ha of wetland and 10 ha of grassland habitat.</p> <p>Over the ten-year period GRCA completed the following restoration work on GRCA-owned lands: 132 ha of afforestation, 660 ha of plantation management and restoration, 3 small newly created wetlands (0.4 ha), 380 ha of maintaining and enhancing created grasslands, and 85 ha of maintaining and enhancing created wetlands.</p>		<p>Greater Golden Horseshoe with an updated Provincial Planning Statement (2024) further changed natural heritage policies.</p> <p>Some municipalities have updated Natural Heritage System mapping and policies as part of comprehensive review and update of Official Plans.</p>

Vegetation

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Significant plant communities	Rare cliff, talus, crevice and cave communities are associated with the Eramosa River Valley, which has been designated a provincially significant Life Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). Globally and provincially rare Dry Tallgrass Prairie and Dry Black Oak Tallgrass Savannah communities occur as scattered remnants throughout the County of Brant, Township of North Dumfries, the City of Cambridge and Oxford County.	<p>Significant plant communities continue to be impacted by intensive agricultural practices, urbanization, and spread of invasive species.</p> <p>Over the last decade, there has been some limited restoration of significant plant communities.</p>		A suite of grassland communities, including Dry Tallgrass prairie, is being maintained on select GRCA properties throughout the watershed (Luther Marsh, Damascus, Morton, Birkett Lane, Dunnville properties).	<p>Land development along the north shore of Lake Erie continues to be a threat to globally and provincially significant coastal wetland communities.</p> <p>Agricultural practices, land development, and below water extraction continue to pose a potential threat to wetlands throughout the watershed. Fens, bogs, and organic swamps are particularly sensitive to hydrologic alterations caused by below water extraction.</p> <p>Natural succession and land development continue to threaten rare tallgrass prairie communities within the central portions of the watershed.</p>
Rare Plant Species	At least 64 plant species recorded in the watershed are ranked as provincially rare (S1- S3) by the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC). Of these, 19 species are listed as species at risk (Special Concern, Threatened, or Endangered) in Ontario.	Of the 32 rare plant species that historically occurred on or near GRCA land, 14 species have been confirmed as still present. Eleven species are legally protected under Ontario's Endangered Species Act.		<p>Phragmites control efforts on a GRCA property that is host to Virginia mallow, a provincially and nationally endangered species, have contributed to a more than doubling of the area covered by Virginia mallow.</p> <p>GRCA staff have been documenting healthy butternut trees on GRCA owned lands,</p>	<p>Climate change, invasive or nuisance species (i.e., white tailed deer), illegal collection and other unregulated activities (i.e., all terrain vehicles, agricultural activities) are considered the greatest threats to rare plant species.</p> <p>Natural disease or exotic pests continue to threaten species such as American chestnut,</p>

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
				including genetic testing of some of the trees to check for purity (pure and hybrid trees are mapped as both could provide important genetic material for future restoration efforts).	black ash, butternut, eastern flowering dogwood, and eastern hemlock. Species listed as provincially threatened or endangered are legally protected under Ontario's Endangered Species Act. Some municipalities also afford protection to rare plant species through their Official Plan policies.

Fauna

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Significant Animal Populations	Thirty nine herpetofauna species (20 amphibians and 19 reptiles) have been recorded within the watershed. As many as 292 breeding and non-breeding birds have been confirmed and 44 mammals have been documented historically. Bald Eagle breeding has been confirmed at as many as 8 sites between Luther Marsh and Dunnville Marsh. Luther Marsh remains one of the most significant sites for wildlife. Species known to breed at Luther Marsh include Bald Eagle, Osprey, Least Bittern, Black Tern, Virginia Rail, Black-crowned Nightheron and Great Blue Heron. Significant numbers of waterfowl (i.e. Mallard, Wood Duck, Blue- and Green-winged Teal, American Widgeon, and Gadwall) occupy the marsh areas during the spring and fall migration. Many waterfowl and colonial waterbirds, including Great Blue Heron, Blackcrowned Night-heron and Green Heron breed at Luther. As many as 400 Great Egret have been known to occupy fall roost at Luther Marsh. River Otter, a species once thought to be extirpated in southern Ontario was recently rediscovered at Luther Marsh and near the confluence of the Grand River and Speed Rivers in Cambridge.	Bald eagle and osprey populations remain stable and have likely increased as a result of improved water quality and related conservation efforts across the watershed. Brook trout populations appear to have remained stable within key cold-water tributaries. Non-native brown trout and migratory rainbow trout populations also remain stable within the watershed. The total number of hunters and ducks harvested at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area continued to decline between 2014 and 2024. Hunter success rates continued to fluctuate and peaked in 2016 and 2023, with an overall slight downward trend between 2014 and 2024. This suggests that migratory waterfowl populations at Luther Marsh are relatively stable but possibly declining.	Ongoing monitoring of animal populations by many parties	Bird populations in the watershed continue to be monitored and assessed as part of the third Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas project (2021-2025), which is being led by the Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and Birds Canada.	The installation of wind turbines may be a threat to birds and bats. Further studies is needed. Hydrologic alterations due to climate change and the spread of invasive species such as Phragmites australis pose a threat to wetland dependent species, including fish, mussels, waterfowl, and waterbirds such as great blue heron and great egret.
Rare Animal Species	At least 54 animal species recorded in the watershed are ranked as provincially rare (S1- S3) by the NHIC including 33 breeding birds, 4 amphibians, 11 reptiles and 6	Recent research by the GRCA indicates that there are over 270 rare animal species within the watershed, including 96 species at risk that are legally protected under	Ongoing monitoring of	Increased monitoring efforts by the GRCA and others have led to a better understanding of the abundance and distribution of aquatic and	Unregulated agricultural activities, land development, invasive species (e.g. Phragmites australis, purple loosestrife, flowering rush), and

Category	Natural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
	<p>mammals. Of these, 41 species are listed by the OMNR as species at risk (Special Concern, Threatened, or Endangered) in Ontario. Twelve invertebrates are ranked as provincially rare and Monarch is listed as a species of special concern provincially and federally. Ten species within the Grand River and its tributaries are currently listed as species at risk by the OMNR.</p>	<p>Ontario's Endangered Species Act: 43 birds, 14 fishes, 12 mollusks, 11 reptiles, 6 insects, and 3 amphibians.</p> <p>Of the 31 species that historically occurred on or near GRCA land, all but 3 species (spiny softshell turtle, spotted turtle, and gray ratsnake) are confirmed to be present.</p> <p>Sections of the Grand River and its tributaries continue to support variety of provincially and federally protected aquatic species at risk, especially fishes and mussels, in spite of high sediment and nutrient levels.</p> <p>Recent monitoring efforts suggest that redside dace (endangered) may now be extirpated within Irvine Creek, a tributary of the Grand River.</p> <p>Wavy-rayed lampmussel (special concern) was confirmed for the first time in a middle section of the Speed River.</p>	<p>rare animal species</p>	<p>terrestrial species at risk within the Grand River watershed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRCA partnered with Department of Fisheries and Oceans to carry out freshwater mussel sampling within localized reaches of the Speed River, Fairchild Creek, Whiteman's Creek, and the Grand River, completed in 2022 and 2023. Additional monitoring and assessment were completed by the University of Windsor and others. GRCA monitored grassland birds on GRCA land to assess the efficacy of habitat restoration & conservation efforts, with a focus on rare birds such as bobolink (threatened), eastern meadow (threatened), and grasshopper sparrow (special concern). <p>Signage informing the public about reddsides dace, a Species of Risk, was installed at locations along Irvine Creek, a tributary of the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA collaborated with Nature Canada and provided technical advice to help support the nomination of 2 Key Biodiversity Areas within the watershed. The Grand River Marsh Complex was determined to be critical for the protection of aerial insectivores such as barn swallow (downlisted to special concern) and bank swallow (threatened). The Nith River between Ayr and Paris was deemed to be critical for the protection of rapids clubtail (threatened) and other aquatic or semi-aquatic species at risk.</p> <p>A national recovery strategy for reddsides dace was developed by DFO in 2024.</p> <p>A report on the progress of recovery strategy implementation for round pigtoe was issued by DFO in 2024.</p> <p>DFO issued a management plan for mapleleaf and rainbow mussel in 2023.</p> <p>MECP issued recovery strategies for 3 protected mussels in 2023.</p>	<p>climate change continue to threaten rare animal species, including aquatic and terrestrial species at risk.</p> <p>Poor water quality within the lower Grand River and physical barriers (i.e., dams) are considered limiting factors for rare fishes and molluscs.</p>

Cultural Heritage Values

Resource Harvesting

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Fishing	The river was used for historic Aboriginal, domestic and commercial fishing and processing. The river continues to be a major fisheries attraction.	None			
Shoreline Resource Harvesting	Trapping of fur-bearing animals, collection of aquatic plants, hunting of birds and land animals, mines and quarries in river valleys.	None			
Extraction of Water	There are 4 surface water intakes for drinking water (Region of Waterloo, City of Guelph, City of Brantford and Six Nations). The river also provides private supply for agriculture and industry.	Municipalities continue to assess the need for new water supply sources to meet demand and in response to trends in water quality in existing sources. This may change the traditional proportions of river vs groundwater reliance in the watershed.	Growing populations requiring additional water supplies. Elevated nitrates and chlorides in some municipal drinking water sources.	The GRCA continues to deliver the drinking water source protection program under the Clean Water Act to protect municipal water sources from contamination or overuse. The GRCA continues to conduct reviews of Aggregate Resource Act applications to identify where dewatering of aggregate sites could impact the quality or quantity of vulnerable municipal drinking water sources (groundwater or surface water).	Yes

Water Transport

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Commercial Transportation	The river is mainly used for pleasure craft today, but historically was used for prehistoric trade and to move commercial freight.	None			
Transportation Services	In the past, the river contained fur trade posts, navigational improvements (i.e. Grand River Navigational Co.), shipyards and facilities for loading/provisioning passengers.	None			
Exploration & Surveying	The river was used for French and British exploration, migration and settlement and surveying expeditions (i.e. Augustus Jones).	None			

Riparian Settlement

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Siting of Dwellings	Shoreline seasonal dwellings (i.e. Paleo- Indian sites in the southern watershed), riverside homesteads and farms (i.e. Doon Heritage Crossroads), permanent riverside dwellings (i.e. Tisdale House), dispersed dwellings in settlement patterns (i.e. Hiram “King” Capron).	Additional discoveries of archaeological and spiritual value.	<p>Development and construction projects continue to prompt discovery of archaeological finds. For example, since 2018, over 50,000 Indigenous artifacts have been excavated from a Kitchener site, including carbonized seeds, pottery, spearheads, and evidence of a longhouse and village. The finds date from the Late Archaic and Late Woodland time periods. The site is near Strasburg Creek, a tributary of the Grand River.</p> <p>An archaeological dig in Brantford that wrapped up in 2016 excavated nearly 400,000 items over a few years. The artifacts included an Upper Canada coin dating to the 1820s, relics from early European settlers, and Indigenous materials dating to 500BC.</p>		
River-based Communities	Permanent shoreline Aboriginal communities (i.e. Middleport Site National Historic Site) and river industry-based communities (i.e. the Goldie Family and the Village of Greenfield).	<p>Adaptive re-use of historic buildings in river-based communities is ongoing (e.g., Gaslight District in Cambridge).</p> <p>Review and potential designation of heritage structures in river-based communities is underway.</p> <p>Greater awareness of First Nations land rights and treaties.</p>	<p>There is an increased awareness of the roll that the river played in the establishment of communities and an interest in preserving and adapting the buildings for re-use.</p> <p>Changes to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2022 affected procedures and criteria for listing properties on municipal registers, designating properties under the Ontario Heritage Act, and establishing Heritage Conservation Districts. These changes have the potential to increase the risk of demolition or loss of built heritage in river-based communities.</p>	Municipalities continue to review and update municipal registers under the Ontario Heritage Act.	Yes
River-influenced Transportation	Ferries and fords (i.e. Six Nation of the Grand River Ferry Crossing), road bridges (i.e. West Montrose Covered Bridge), rail bridges (i.e. CPR Speed River Bridge)	None			

Culture & Recreation

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Spiritual Associations	Sacred or spiritual sites, ritual or ceremonial structures and sites (Detweiler's Meetinghouse, aboriginal burial places - many of which are found throughout the watershed), European burial places (i.e. John Galt Memorial).	Growing appreciation of First Nations' ways of knowing and stewarding the river.	Greater awareness of First Nations rights and history because of global and local movements towards truth and reconciliation.	<p>Many events and activities are helping to foster greater awareness and appreciation for First Nations' ways of knowing and stewarding the river and furthering reconciliation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>Two Row on the Grand, held annually since 2016, is a 10-day canoe trip on the Grand River where Indigenous and Non-Indigenous participants build mutual respect and understanding of values and culture through the shared experience. The canoe trip is a physical embodiment of the Two Row Wampum, the original peace treaty between Indigenous and settler communities. An article published in the Canadian Journal of Native Education in 2019 illustrated the experiences of an Indigenous participant and a non-Indigenous participant in the event .</p> <p>Indigenous-led Water Walks have become annual events in the watershed. Inspired by Anishnaabe Elder Josephine-Baa Mandamin, people from all nations join in a week-long ceremonial walk honoring the Nibi (water) from the river's mouth to the headwaters.</p> <p>Ohneganos is an Indigenous water research program led by McMaster University's Dr. Dawn Martin Hill. An interdisciplinary team of academics, local experts and project partners is creating new ways to integrate Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science. Among other initiatives, Ohneganos and its partners held a Traditional Ecological Knowledge Summit on March 6, 2024, at Six Nations of the Grand River. Through digital oral storytelling, a youth-led video podcast, and other projects, the group is helping to share Traditional Ecological Knowledge.</p>	Yes, collaborations among Indigenous and non-Indigenous interest holders continue.

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Cultural Expression	Meetinghouse, aboriginal burial places - many of which are found throughout the watershed), European burial places (i.e. John Galt Memorial).	Development of new artistic expressions celebrating the cultural heritage of the Grand River.	Growing interest in exploring the cultural heritage of the Grand River to engage watershed residents in stewarding the river and developing a sense of place.	<p>Many individuals and organizations are creating artistic works that celebrate the history of the Grand River.</p> <p>For example, the Grand River Histories Project, lead by Regional Tourism Organization #4, recognizes that telling the story of the Grand River is as important for fostering connection with the river as creating recreational infrastructure. Storytellers, artists, and creatives came together to share experiences, resulting in the creation of a program to fund experience development. Funding supported Tom Ostapchuk's short film The Grand: From source to mouth, documenting his self supported kayak trip down the Grand River. The film was an official selection for the Paddling Film Festival World Tour, the Waterwalker Film Festival, and the Forest City Film Festival.</p> <p>The Grand River Community Play Project: The Voice of the River, led by playwright Peter Smith, held interactive performances throughout the watershed, serving as "prologues" for a planned event running the length of the river in 2025. Held in partnership with RTO #4 and members of Six Nations of the Grand River, the project uses performance and storytelling to reconnect people with the river and a sense of place.</p>	Yes, this work continues.
Early Recreation	Recreational boating, angling, land-based touring, organized river recreation facilities/clubs.	There has been an increase in recreational boating opportunities in the watershed.	Growing interest in adventure-based tourism and support from Regional Tourism Organizations to develop new destination experiences.	Opportunities to paddle the Grand River are expanding. Six Nations Tourism offers guided tours that share information about First Nations beliefs, centred on the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address. Grand River Rafting developed a new paddling route for the lower Grand River from York to Cayuga, named Steamboat Alley in recognition of the historical development of locks and canals for steamship passage by the Grand River Navigation Company. Grand River Experiences developed a Nith River guided canoe trip.	Yes

Jurisdictional Uses

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Conflict & Military Associations	Aboriginal internecine conflict, aboriginal- European conflict, European internecine conflict (i.e. Port Maitland), military expeditions (i.e. Elora Drill Shed/The Armory).	None		The Heritage Working Group held a workshop in 2015 that included a half day program on The Great War Remembered.	
Boundaries	International borders, interprovincial and inter-territorial boundaries, land use/cultural boundaries, transboundary rivers.	None			

Category	Cultural Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Environmental Regulation	Flood control, water management, aquatic ecosystem management and regulation of river access have been issues historically. The Conservation Authorities Act was passed in 1946 by the Ontario government in response to severe flooding and erosion problems in the province. In 1948, the Grand River Conservation Authority was formed to deal with the issues noted above. GRCA regulates development in hazard lands, including the floodplain, through a regulation under the Conservation Authorities Act.	Environmental regulations continue to evolve over time.	Legislative change.	The Conservation Authorities Act has been amended a few times over the last decade with more substantive changes in 2020-2024. As a result, all conservation authorities deliver mandatory programs and services related to the risk of natural hazards, including floodplain regulation and flood forecasting and warning. The GRCA regulates development in hazard areas (floodplains, wetlands, etc.) under Ontario Regulation 41/24 (Prohibited activities, exemptions and permits). The GRCA no longer comments on matters of natural heritage on land use planning related matters. Commenting on natural heritage remains the responsibility of municipalities. Other changes in the provincial policy framework for management of natural heritage is described above under the "terrestrial ecosystem" value.	

Recreational Heritage Values

River Touring

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
River Access Points for River Touring	The Grand has over 30 organized paddling access points in the river system.	Improvements in recreational river access points.	<p>Grand River Access Point Improvement Project: RTOs working with the GRCA, municipalities, and many other partners are assessing river usage and awareness and improving river access points. The project began with development of an Access Point Standards Manual and Signage and Style Guide. The new standards were piloted at Wilson's Flats in the Township of Centre Wellington and projects followed at Idlewood Creek in the City of Kitchener, West Montrose in the Township of Woolwich, the Cambridge to Paris Rail Trailhead in the City of Cambridge, and Otterbein Road in the City of Kitchener. Improvements have included parking, washrooms, canoe racks, picnic tables and benches, information kiosks and maps, garbage bins, and improved signage (e.g., river mile markers).</p> <p>Upgrades to various boat launches and docks across many GRCA conservation areas. In 2023, the boat launch area at Rockwood Conservation Area was upgraded, featuring a new assisted canoe and kayak launch as well as shoreline improvements to help prevent further erosion. Docks and canoe launches were installed in new locations at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area and annual launch opening timelines were expanded. Brant Conservation Area improved two boat launches and has expanded the adjacent area to accommodate more space, parking, bus access and washrooms. Byng Island Conservation Area maintained access to their Lake Erie boat launch while addressing issues with Ash tree die-off, due to Emerald Ash Borer, along the shoreline. They also operate a boat rental program with direct access to the Grand River. In 2021, Shade's Mills Conservation Area introduced a boat concessionaire that provides canoe, kayak and stand-up paddle board rentals, leading to increased capacity to offer water-based recreation services.</p>		Work is ongoing.
Portages	The river has marked dam portages.	None			
Paddling, Kayaking, Rowing and Rafting	Paddling, rowing and rafting occur on many stretches of the Grand and its tributaries. Whitewater kayaking occurs in the spring in the Elora Gorge. Stand up paddleboarding is also starting to become popular.	Expansion of opportunities for guided paddling experiences.	Opportunities to paddle the Grand River are expanding. Six Nations Tourism offers guided tours that share information about First Nations beliefs, centred on the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address. Grand River Rafting developed a new paddling route for the lower Grand River from York to Cayuga, named Steamboat Alley in recognition of the historical development of locks and canals for steamship passage by the Grand River Navigation Company. Grand River Experiences developed a Nith River guided canoe trip.		
Motorized Pleasure Boating	Motorized boating occurs on some of the reservoirs and in the lower part of the river.	Concerns raised by some non-motorized paddlers about the impact of fast-moving motorized watercraft on shoreline erosion and paddler safety.			

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Sail Boating	Sailing takes place on the major reservoirs (i.e. Belwood Lake Conservation Area) and in the lower Grand.	None			
Tour Boats	Private day boat excursions occur below Brantford (i.e. Grand River Dinner Cruises).	None			

Water Contact/Content

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Swimming	In designated beaches at GRCA parks.	Introduction of capacity limits at some GRCA conservation areas with beaches.	To manage growing demand for outdoor and water-based recreation and balance use with conservation of the environmental features.	The GRCA manages capacity limits at Conservation Areas to balance use of facilities and environmental impacts on day use areas. The GRCA provides real-time park status capacity updates on its website. An online reservation system was introduced in 2021 to manage visitation at the Elora Quarry, a popular swimming location.	Demand remains high for access to some swimming locations.
Water Skiing	In reservoirs and lower Grand.	None			
River Tubing	Tubing is popular at the Elora Gorge.	None			

Angling

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Access Points for Angling	There are many organized access points for anglers, particularly for fly fishing in the Fergus/Elora area.	None			
Fish Passageways	Fish ladders are incorporated into some of the dams. Byng Island Conservation Area is home to one of the country's biggest fish ladders, which allows lake fish to migrate past the Dunnville Dam to prime spawning and nursery habitats in the river.	The fishway at the Dunnville Dam is providing limited passage.	Poor location.	The GRCA commissioned an assessment of the Dunnville fishway in 2020. While the state of repair of the fishway could be improved, due to its location, it is unlikely to attract a substantive portion of the migrating walleye population even if improved.	
Fly Fishing	Several key stretches are well-known for fly fishing (brown trout).	None			
Ice Fishing	GRCA parks offer ice fishing on reservoirs once ice has formed and is safe (i.e. Shades Mill Conservation Area).	Warmer than typical temperatures during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 winter seasons resulted in cancellation of ice fishing on GRCA-owned reservoirs.	Mild winter conditions. If climate change results in more frequent warmer winters, these impacts could become prevalent	When conditions are not favourable for ice fishing, GRCA cancels the program.	Yes

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Other Recreational Fishing	We have several stretches of the river system that are fished for warm and cold water species. The river is renowned for its brown trout, trophy bass and pike fishing. Fishing is done on the shore, by wading and also in boats (i.e. canoes, drift boats).	Some concern regarding consumption limits for fish caught in some reaches of the Grand River and its tributaries. Ongoing assessment and stocking of sport fisheries, including brown trout and walleye.	Community perceptions and values.	In 2023 the Six Nations Wildlife and Stewardship Office surveyed community members to learn about priorities, attitudes, and activities related to fisheries and fish consumption in priority water bodies, including the Grand River. The study confirmed the continued close interconnected relationship between the Grand River and the Six Nations community. While the Grand River remains a popular fishing location for the community, the survey revealed concerns about pollution of the river. The Province of Ontario is responsible for providing fish consumption advice based on the level of contaminants found in fish according to their location, species and length. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and partners continue with annual stocking of brown trout in the Grand River (about 25,000 per year) and the Conestogo River tailwater (about 20,000 per year). Brown trout stocking also occurs in local ponds including in Mill Creek – Cambridge, Marden Community Centre Ponds, Watson Pond – North Dumfries (Ayr), and Rockwood Conservation Area. Over the past decade, the Ministry of Natural Resources conducted studies, using acoustic telemetry and genetics, to detail contributions by Grand River walleye to Great Lakes fisheries.	Some people remain concerned about the safety of consuming sport fish from the Grand River.

Hunting

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Hunting Areas	The GRCA offers hunting opportunities at the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, Belwood Lake Conservation Area, Conestogo Lake Conservation Area, and 18 miscellaneous properties throughout the watershed. Hunters can pursue a variety of game, including deer, waterfowl, turkey, pheasant and other small game. Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area is particularly notable, attracting hunters from across Ontario for its excellent waterfowl hunting on Luther Lake. Hunting is also done on private lands along the river.	Minor changes to the GRCA's hunting program.		In 2018 the GRCA implemented a lottery system for hunting permits at Belwood Lake and Conestogo Lake CAs, high demand areas. In 2022, following a comprehensive review, the GRCA updated the list of properties on which it allows hunting.	
Controlled Hunts	GRCA and the OMNR support controlled hunts in various locations at specific times of the year.	None			

Trails and Corridors

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Trailheads and Access Points	We now have a network of trails with access points throughout the watershed.	Improvements in trail infrastructure	Growing demand for use	Various trail improvements and upgrades have been implemented across the GRCA's conservation areas. This includes erosion controls, installation of benches, and a community firepit at Rockwood Conservation Area; expanded nature trails, wayfinding and habitat restoration at Byng Island Conservation Area; and boardwalks installed along Laurel Creek Conservation Area trails.	
Multi-Purpose Trailways	New multi-purpose river trails are being developed throughout the watershed and linked together (this was part of the vision for the Grand that was included in our Stewardship Plan). Many people use the river trails for walking, hiking, running, birding/wildlife viewing cycling and photography.	Growing demand for use	Improvements in infrastructure and enhanced promotion of the Grand River as a destination for outdoor adventures.	See below.	Demand continues to grow
Hiking Pathways (single-use)	The Grand Valley Trail is a 250-kilometre footpath that stretches between the village of Belwood to Port Maitland, near Rock Point Provincial Park, on Lake Erie, south of Dunnville. It mostly follows the Grand River.	Growing demand for use Sections of the Walter Bean Trail along the Grand River through Kitchener have been damaged by erosion and river ice.	Growing populations and enhanced promotion of the Grand River as a destination for outdoor adventures Riverside trail infrastructure is vulnerable to flooding, erosion, and damage by river ice.	In 2022, the Grand Watershed Trails Network launched a new website (www.grandtrails.ca) to help cyclists, hikers, paddlers and tourists better plan their trips. The maps show river access points and link to local attractions and businesses. Municipalities continue to implement active transportation master plans and address needed trail improvements. The City of Cambridge built a new pedestrian bridge over the Grand River in 2018. As part of the "Back to the Rivers" vision for Cambridge, the new bridge increases connectivity to the river-scape and improves pedestrian and cycling connections within downtown Cambridge.	Demand continues to grow
Cycling Routes	Several cycling routes along the river have been developed.	Growing demand for use	Increased demand, particularly during the Covid pandemic, as well as expanding access to e-bikes. Investments in cycling infrastructure including rail trails and active transportation networks.	In 2024, Water Cycles, an initiative that connects communities with water through cycling, held a Bikes and Blues Festival in Elora/Fergus and volunteer-run bike rides in Waterloo, Elora, Fergus, and Luther Marsh. Other signature cycling events that celebrate the Grand River include the Paris to Ancaster Race, held April annually since the mid-1990s; the Tour de Guelph; and Dunnville Grand Tour.	Demand continues to grow

Active Parks

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Overnight Camping Areas	There are several private and public parks on the banks of the river which offer camping.	Ongoing improvement of facilities	High demand for camping in some areas	In 2019, the Elora Gorge Conservation Area campground reconfiguration was completed and included an addition of 50 new campsites to help provide increased overnight camping opportunities in the conservation area.	

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Day-Use and Picnic Areas	There are many private and public parks on the banks of the river where people can picnic.	New measures required to manage visitation	Increasing demand for outdoor experiences	<p>In 2016-2018, the GRCA installed automatic entry gates at three CAs. These systems have led to enhanced security, streamlined entry process, expanded operating hours, reduced wait times, generated revenue, and increased overall convenience for gatehouse staff and patrons.</p> <p>In 2021, an online reservation system was implemented at the Elora Quarry CA, along with limits on the number of daily visitors and designated pre-paid parking. These measures have resulted in positive outcomes, including reduced environmental impact, improved visitor experience, and minimized vehicle lineups on municipal roads.</p> <p>The GRCA's Conservation Area Activity Status webpage, developed during the pandemic, continues to be an important online feature. It allows visitors to check real-time data on whether a conservation area is closed, nearing capacity, or still welcoming visitors before their visit. The webpage has also evolved to include information on the status of amenities and activities, such as beaches, boat launches, and winter activities.</p>	Demand for outdoor recreational opportunities remains high

Winter Activities

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Snowmobiling and Dog Sledding	Belwood Lake Conservation Area offers snowmobiling opportunities.	None			
Cross-Country Skiing	Trails along the river can be used for cross-country skiing. Some GRCA parks offer groomed trails (i.e. Laurel Creek Conservation Area).	None			
Skating	No	None			

Nature Appreciation

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Outdoor Education Centres	Outdoor education opportunities for all ages exist through a number of outdoor centres owned and operated by the GRCA, school boards and others (i.e. Rare Charitable Research Reserve).	Many outdoor education centres were built decades ago and require substantive investment to maintain infrastructure.	Aging infrastructure and few sources of funding	The GRCA is undertaking a review of its Outdoor Environmental Education Program, moving towards a model that will allow some program delivery from Conservation Areas. The GRCA, with fundraising by the Grand River Conservation Foundation, broke ground on construction of a new Guelph Lake Nature Centre in 2024.	Yes
Wildlife Management Areas	Specific wildlife management areas provide opportunities for nature viewing and appreciation such as Luther Marsh and Dunnville Marsh.	None			
Organized Hikes	The Grand Valley Trails Association and other groups offer hikes to the public to increase nature awareness and appreciation.	None		Many trail organizations are active in leading hikes along watercourses and in natural areas, including the Grand Watershed Trails Network, Grand Valley Trails Association and many with local or regional geographic focus.	

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
River Lookouts	We have several organized/constructed lookouts for people to enjoy scenic views of the river (i.e. Murray Lookout on the Cambridge to Paris Rail Trail).	None			
Scenic River Views	Other scenic vistas have been identified in various planning documents and official plans which should be recognized.	None			
Scenic River Drives	The Grand River Scenic Parkway was developed after the designation of the Grand and helps promote awareness of the Heritage River designation.	None		Regional Tourism Organization #1 created an 85 km scenic motorcycle route along the Grand River in Haldimand County, titled "Cruise the Coast).	

Events and Festivals

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Cultural Festivals	There are many cultural festivals held throughout the watershed such as Oktoberfest in Kitchener- Waterloo, Applefest in St. George, Maple Syrup Festivals in Elmira and Perth and the Cobblestone Festival in Paris.	None			
River Festivals and Celebrations	There are a number of river celebration events such as the 2 Rivers Festival in Guelph, Dunnville Mudcat Festival and Riverfest Elora.	None		River Heritage Festival: This festival held on September 22, 2024, at the GRCA's Brant Conservation Area celebrated the 30 th anniversary of the naming of the Grand River a Canadian Heritage River. Children's Water Festivals are held throughout the watershed, educating thousands of school aged children and volunteers each year about their important role in protecting and conserving water.	

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Recreational Events	Many recreational events are offered annually such as the Grand River Bass Derby in the Region of Waterloo and Day of 1000 Canoes in Haldimand County.	None		<p>Grand River Conservation Areas continue to be popular venues for hosting a wide range of special events, attracting both local community groups and organizations from out of town. These areas are often appealing due to their scenic locations along the Grand River or local reservoirs, offering access to naturalized settings and water-based recreational activities. Over the years, they have hosted a variety of popular events, including fishing derbies, triathlons, charity walks, dragon boat races and film productions. A prominent event is the Hillside Festival, an annual three-day, multi-stage music festival held at Guelph Lake Conservation Area since 1987, which celebrates sustainability, diversity and local artistry.</p> <p>Shade's Mills Conservation Area has become a popular destination for cross-country enthusiasts, hosting numerous cross-country fun-runs and championship races.</p> <p>Rockwood Conservation Area partners with local organizations to promote personal health and the love of the outdoors. The local municipality organizes free weekly walking events for seniors, while the Community Resource Centre of North and Centre Wellington host a weekly parent and stroller walk. Additionally, agreements with local school boards allow students to visit and understand the importance of the outdoors. Rockwood and Elora Quarry Conservation Areas are also popular filming locations, which not only raises awareness of the conservation areas but also supports the surrounding local economies.</p>	

Cultural Tours

Category	Recreational Heritage Value	Description of Change in Value	Reason for Change	Actions Taken in Response	Is the Change or Threat Still Present?
Guided Walking Tours	Historical societies (i.e. Heritage Cambridge) offer walking tours during the summer months.	None			
Self-Guided Tours	Several municipalities offer self-guided walking tours to promote heritage appreciation.	None			

Appendix E: Integrity Guidelines

Natural Integrity Values

The Grand River was not designated a Canadian Heritage River based on its natural heritage values. However, in keeping with the Canadian Heritage Rivers System Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines (2024), natural heritage values are included in this report.

Integrity Guideline	Integrity Value	Change In Integrity Value	Threat or Stressor	Action(s) Taken to Address Threat	Threat Still Present?
The nominated section is of sufficient size to include significant representations of all of the natural processes, features, or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding natural value.	The river was not designated based on its natural heritage values. The Grand is about 290 km in length and with its 4 major tributaries - the Nith, Conestogo, Eramosa and Speed Rivers it totals 627 km. A network of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, some of which are unique (i.e. Carolinian Zone) support many diverse populations of flora and fauna. The large size of the watershed also affords a wide variation in geologic representations.	None			
The nominated section includes those ecosystem components which contribute significantly to the provision of habitat for species in need of protection.	The river was not designated based on natural heritage values. The river provides the required water quantity and quality needed to support its features and species.	None			
There are no human-made impoundments within the nominated section.	The river was not designated based on natural heritage values. The Grand River contains a variety of impoundments. The GRCA owns and operates 7 dams and reservoirs built between 1942 and 1976 to address flooding, drought, and water quality problems. The GRCA owns another 21 small dams, many built in the 1800s and early 1900s for transportation, water power and water supply. Today they have primarily recreational, aesthetic or historical value. There are about 200 more dams in the watershed owned by municipalities and private landowners.	None		The GRCA continues to maintain water infrastructure, including dams and dikes, as needed.	
All key elements and ecosystem components are unaffected by impoundments located outside the nominated section.	See above. The river was not designated based on natural heritage values.	None			

Integrity Guideline	Integrity Value	Change In Integrity Value	Threat or Stressor	Action(s) Taken to Address Threat	Threat Still Present?
<p>The water in the nominated section is uncontaminated to the extent that its natural aquatic ecosystem is intact.</p>	<p>The river was not designated based on natural heritage values.</p> <p>The Grand is a leading source of nutrients to the eastern basin of Lake Erie. Water quality issues in the river are influenced by wastewater treatment plant discharges, rural/agricultural non-point sources and urban non-point sources. Phosphorus and nitrate levels in the river, although improved since the 1970s, still remain high¹⁰.</p> <p>Although nutrient levels can be high, the river is still able to provide habitat to aquatic flora and fauna including a variety of species at risk.</p>	<p>Overall water quality changes slowly, but there have been reductions in some sources of pollution.</p> <p>Between 2012 and 2023, the GRCA has noted a 92% reduction in annual loading of total ammonia nitrogen and a 35% reduction in annual loading of total phosphorous being discharged by wastewater treatment plants in the Grand River watershed, despite the watershed population increasing by about 17% over the same period. These improvements are the result of WWTP upgrades and optimization¹¹.</p>	<p>Growing population requiring wastewater services within the assimilative capacity of the Grand River.</p> <p>Rural nonpoint sources continue to be a substantive source of nutrient loading to the Grand River.</p> <p>Changes in funding offered for water quality programs can risk progress in water quality improvement.</p>	<p>The collaborative, voluntary Grand River Water Management Plan (2014) includes strategies to address point and nonpoint sources of pollution to the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA continues to monitor water quality throughout the watershed through the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Program, the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program, and via another 9 continuous water quality stations in the Grand and Speed rivers. The information helps support the GRCA's reservoir operations, calibration of water quality models, and reporting on water quality conditions.</p> <p>Upgrades and optimization of municipal wastewater treatment plants has resulted in reductions in nutrient loading to the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA delivers the Rural Water Quality Program and Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization program to reduce rural nonpoint source and wastewater point source discharges of nutrients to the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA collaborates with provincial and federal partners to support the goal of reducing nutrient loading to Lake Erie through the Lake Erie Action Plan.</p>	<p>Yes. The watershed's population is projected to grow to over 1.5 million by 2051. More people generate more treated wastewater that will be discharged to the Grand River and its tributaries. The watershed continues to be home to intensive agricultural production.</p> <p>In 2024, the GRCA entered into 5-year funding agreements with watershed municipalities for delivery of monitoring, rural water quality and wastewater optimization programs.</p>
<p>The natural aesthetic character of the nominated section is free of, or not adversely affected by, human developments.</p>	<p>The river was not designated based on natural heritage values.</p> <p>New development is mostly limited to areas outside of the floodplain and river valleys due to environmental regulation and municipal official plan policies. However, some development does occur within the valley.</p>	<p>In some areas, development (i.e., residential) within the valley does hinder the potential for natural heritage viewscapes. However, there are stretches of the river that are more natural. The Grand River Forest runs along the river from Cambridge to Paris in an almost unbroken 20-kilometre strip. It includes extensive uplands and swamp forest, bogs in kettle depressions, fens, remnants of prairie and oak savannah. Many Carolinian species flourish there.</p>			

¹⁰ Water Quality Working Group. 2013. [Sources of Nutrients and Sediments in the Grand River Watershed](#). Grand River Conservation Authority.

¹¹ GRCA. 2024. [2023 Watershed Overview of Wastewater Treatment Plant Performance](#). Grand River Conservation Authority.

Cultural Integrity Values

Integrity Guideline	Integrity Value	Change In Integrity Value	Threat or Stressor	Action(s) Taken to Address Threat	Threat Still Present?
The nominated section is of sufficient size to include significant representations of all of the features, activities or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding cultural value.	The watershed is of sufficient size that it possesses a deep and varied history that is seen today in the form of historic sites and monuments, heritage buildings and bridges. History is captured in museums and seen through remnant artifacts that still exist along the river's winding expanse.	Some cultural features have been lost (i.e., bridges), but many have also been rehabilitated, attempting to balance cultural values and public safety.		Adaptive reuse of buildings is also becoming increasingly popular.	
The visual character of the nominated section enables uninterrupted appreciation of at least one of the periods of the river's historical importance.	A number of municipalities have introduced Cultural Heritage Landscapes into their planning documents (i.e. Township of Woolwich – 2012, Township of North Dumfries – in progress, City of Cambridge – to begin after 2015). Heritage Conservation Districts have also been established /considered (i.e. Waterloo and Guelph).	The establishment of Cultural Heritage Landscapes and Heritage Conservation Districts help to protect the cultural history of areas located along the river. Pastoral vistas are common along the river.		Over the last decade, the Black Bridge Cultural Heritage Landscape was established and cultural heritage landscape studies completed by the townships of Woolwich, Wellesley, Centre Wellington, Wilmot and North Dumfries and the cities of Waterloo and Guelph. Heritage conservation district studies were undertaken by the cities of Guelph and Cambridge. Many municipalities are emphasizing their community's connection to the river through trails and restoration projects as well as adaptive re-use of old mills and historic buildings located along the river (i.e. Cambridge Gaslight District).	
The key artifacts and sites comprising the cultural values for which the river is nominated are unimpaired by impoundments and human land uses.	Not applicable. See the natural integrity guidelines above.	None			
The water quality of the nominated section does not detract from the visual character or the cultural experience provided by its cultural values.	In some locations nutrient levels can lead to excessive algae growth in the river which can be seen from the riverbanks or bridges.	See the natural integrity water quality value above and recreational integrity value below.			

Recreational Integrity Values


Integrity Guideline	Integrity Value	Change In Integrity Value	Threat or Stressor	Action(s) Taken to Address Threat	Threat Still Present?
The river possesses water of a quality suitable for contact recreational activities, including those recreational opportunities for which it is nominated.	Water quality in the river is such that recreational uses such as canoeing, kayaking and fishing remain popular.	See the natural integrity and cultural integrity water quality values above. Blue-green algae is observed in some of the GRCA's reservoirs most years. Blue-green algae thrive on nutrients from fields and lawns that find their way into local waterways and reservoirs during heavy rainfall and spring melts and cause their populations to grow rapidly, forming blooms or scum on the surface of the water. Some varieties of blue-	If climate change results in more frequent hot, dry weather, these impacts could become more common.	When blooms are present, recreational users of the reservoirs are reminded to take precautions (e.g., avoid swimming in affected areas).	Yes


Integrity Guideline	Integrity Value	Change In Integrity Value	Threat or Stressor	Action(s) Taken to Address Threat	Threat Still Present?
		green algae can produce toxins that are harmful to both people and pets, limiting water-based recreation.			
The river's visual appearance is capable of providing river travelers with a continuous natural experience, or a combined natural and cultural experience, without significant interruption by modern human intrusions.	The river traverses a variety of viewscapes from agricultural to forested rural areas and built up urban areas.	See the cultural integrity value for visual character above.			
The river is capable of supporting recreational uses without significant loss of, or impact on, its natural and cultural values or its visual character.	The river supports a wide array of recreational uses such as fishing, boating and hiking without negatively impacting its ecosystems (i.e. fish populations), cultural or aesthetic value.	There is growing interest by tourism organizations to consider the impacts of river-based recreation on the Grand River.			


Appendix F: Management Plan Recommendations

Stewardship Plan Recommendation	Degree of Achievement	Comments
Develop community-based watershed-wide strategies for shared research, planning, decision-making, implementation and monitoring of important human heritage and recreational values associated with the Heritage River designation. Explore innovative and effective techniques for public involvement (including youth and seniors).	Ongoing	<p>The GRCA's role in maintaining the Canadian Heritage River designation is recognized in a new Conservation Areas Strategy (2024).</p> <p>Many municipalities are emphasizing their community's connection to the river through cultural heritage landscape planning.</p> <p>Regional Tourism Organizations are playing a growing role fostering collaborations on river-based recreation and tourism.</p>
Encourage, recognize and support private and public stewardship in conserving and interpreting the watershed's natural and human heritage.	Ongoing	<p><i>Currents of Change: Inspiring Action along the Grand River</i>, a new exhibit that opened at the Regional Municipality of Waterloo's McDougall Cottage Historic Site in June 2024. Through a blend of history, ecology, and Indigenous and settler narratives, this captivating exhibit examines the profound and dynamic connection between the Grand River, the City of Cambridge's heritage, and our collective future. The exhibit serves as a call to action for all to act as stewards of the Grand River.</p> <p>Examples of the stewardship work of some relevant groups are included in Appendices B and D.</p>
Raise awareness about and celebration of the designation of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River through existing and new community events.	Ongoing	<p>In 2024, the Canadian Heritage River designation was recognized through the <i>Currents of Change</i> exhibit described above, a River Heritage Festival held at Brant Conservation Area, and by many others at local and regional events.</p> <p>A Heritage Working Group, formed in the 1990s to help increase community involvement and commitment to the celebration and management of human heritage resources in the Grand River watershed, held 5 workshops over the past decade, attracting hundreds of participants.</p>
Examine and evaluate the effectiveness of existing heritage and recreational resource management arrangements. Document success and failure, share findings and identify best management practices.	Ongoing	<p>Regional Tourism Organizations have begun holding an annual forum to share information on river-based recreation and tourism in the Grand watershed.</p> <p>The Grand River Water Managers, a network of municipal, First Nations, and agency water managers, continues to advocate for implementation of the collaborative, voluntary Grand River Water Management Plan (2014). The goals of the Plan are to ensure sustainable water supplies, improve water quality, reduce flood damages, and enhance resilience to climate change. The first 5 years of implementation were documented in a Report on Actions (2014-2018).</p>
Encourage the incorporation and integration of strong heritage policies and appropriate recreation and tourism development policies in pertinent policy and planning documents.	Ongoing	<p>Changes to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2022 affected procedures and criteria for listing properties on municipal registers, designating properties under the Ontario Heritage Act, and establishing Heritage Conservation Districts. Municipalities continue to review and update municipal registers under the Ontario Heritage Act.</p> <p>Regional Tourism Organizations have fostered development of shared resources, such as the Access Point Standards Manual and Signage and Style Guide.</p>
Encourage research which can clearly demonstrate the economic and social benefits of our natural and human heritage resources.	Ongoing	<p>A partnership with the Collaborative Water Program at the University of Waterloo explored changes to heritage river values, culminating in a series of briefing notes and a workshop.</p> <p>New research partnerships are demonstrating Two-Eyed Seeing, ways of combining Indigenous and Western ways of knowing about the Grand River.</p>

Stewardship Plan Recommendation	Degree of Achievement	Comments
Encourage municipalities to develop special policies/plans to guide riverfront development. These policies and plans should be designed to resolve conflicting resource issues, to maintain/improve the quality of the experience and to provide for infrastructure to accommodate increasing interest.	Ongoing	Municipalities continue to develop policies and address potential conflicting uses through Master Planning and other studies.
Continue efforts to improve water quality and address new and emerging water quality issues.	Ongoing	<p>The collaborative, voluntary Grand River Water Management Plan (2014) includes strategies to address point and nonpoint sources of pollution to the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA continues to monitor water quality throughout the watershed through the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Program, the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program, and via another 9 continuous water quality stations in the Grand and Speed rivers. The information helps support the GRCA's reservoir operations, calibration of water quality models, and reporting on water quality conditions.</p> <p>Upgrades and optimization of municipal wastewater treatment plants has resulted in reductions in nutrient loading to the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA delivers the Rural Water Quality Program and Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization program to reduce rural nonpoint source and wastewater point source discharges of nutrients to the Grand River.</p> <p>The GRCA collaborates with provincial and federal partners to support the goal of reducing nutrient loading to Lake Erie through the Lake Erie Action Plan.</p>
Emphasize the designation of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River in funding submissions to governments, foundations and organizations and in newspapers, magazines and research publications, wherever possible.	Ongoing	The designation is noted where appropriate.
Develop a code of ethics for recreational use in the Grand River watershed.	Ongoing	
Implement the Grand River Fisheries Management Plan (GRFMP).	On hiatus	After many years of activity, the implementation committee for the Grand River Fisheries Management Plan is currently inactive as a result of changing provincial and GRCA priorities and retirement and changeover in knowledgeable participants.
Explore the opportunity for promoting the Grand River as a "water trail".	Ongoing	<p>Grand River Access Point Improvement Project: RTOs working with the GRCA, municipalities, and many other partners are assessing river usage and awareness and improving river access points. The project began with development of an Access Point Standards Manual and Signage and Style Guide. The new standards were piloted at Wilson's Flats in the Township of Centre Wellington and projects followed at Idlewood Creek in the City of Kitchener, West Montrose in the Township of Woolwich, the Cambridge to Paris Rail Trailhead in the City of Cambridge, and Otterbein Road in the City of Kitchener. Improvements have included parking, washrooms, canoe racks, picnic tables and benches, information kiosks and maps, garbage bins, and improved signage (e.g., river mile markers).</p> <p>Opportunities to paddle the Grand River are expanding. Six Nations Tourism offers guided tours that share information about First Nations beliefs, centred on the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address. Grand River Rafting developed a new paddling route for the lower Grand River from York to Cayuga, named Steamboat Alley in recognition of the historical development of locks and canals for steamship passage by the Grand River Navigation Company. Grand River Experiences developed a Nith River guided canoe trip.</p>
Celebrate and build on successes.	Ongoing	

Eramosa River	Located along Wellington Rd 29, Guelph-Eramosa Township
General Condition of Plaque (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair (will need repair soon) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Repair
If needs repair has been checked, describe the necessary repairs required.	Sign not present. Frame and post rusted over.
If needs repair has been checked, indicate a date by which the repairs will be complete.	Replacement planned for 2025.
Image of Plaque	<p>Photo taken on March 6, 2023</p> 

Grand River	Located in Mill Race Park, Cambridge
General Condition of Plaque (select one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair (will need repair soon) <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Repair
If needs repair has been checked, describe the necessary repairs required.	Minor staining on plaque. Blue coloured backdrop in good condition. Gold coloured text in good condition. Many scratches on the gold coloured boarder. Minor corrosion throughout the metal frame. Sticker on leg (can be easily taken off)
If needs repair has been checked, indicate a date by which the repairs will be complete.	n/a
Image of Plaque	<p>Photo taken on March 6, 2023</p> 

Nith River	Located in Scott Park, New Hamburg
General Condition of Plaque (select one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair (will need repair soon) <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Repair
If needs repair has been checked, describe the necessary repairs required.	Minimal graffiti (marker) on back of sign.
If needs repair has been checked, indicate a date by which the repairs will be complete.	n/a
Image of Plaque	<p>Photo taken on March 6, 2023</p> 

Speed River	Located in John Galt Park, Guelph
General Condition of Plaque (select one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair (will need repair soon) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs Repair
If needs repair has been checked, describe the necessary repairs required.	Plaque not found. Needs to be replaced.
If needs repair has been checked, indicate a date by which the repairs will be complete.	Replacement planned for 2025.
Image of Plaque	No photo taken on March 6, 2023.

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-22

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Annual Report on Category 2 (Municipal) Programs

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-22 – Annual Report on Category 2 (Municipal) Programs be received as information.

Summary:

The Grand River Conservation Authority has reported to participating municipalities on 2024 accomplishments of non-mandatory Category 2 (municipal) programs delivered under Memorandums of Agreement.

Report:

As a result of amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act, in 2024 the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) entered Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with participating municipalities to fund continued delivery of non-mandatory Category 2 (municipal) programs and services. These programs include watershed sciences and collaborative planning, water quality monitoring and reporting, wastewater treatment optimization, conservation and stewardship services, and subwatershed services. These are key programs to advance the GRCA's strategic priority to improve the health of the Grand River watershed.

To fulfill the terms of the MOU, by March 15 of each year, the GRCA provides an annual report to participating municipalities on program accomplishments. The MOU identifies a list of program metrics and deliverables to support reporting.

Attached as Appendix A is the 2024 annual report provided to municipalities in March 2025. The report highlights program work that helped advance understanding of watershed conditions, improved water quality and watershed health, and fostered collaborative problem solving.

Financial Implications:

The GRCA's Category 2 programs had an approximate total budget of \$2,163,000 in 2024. Off-setting funding from a variety of municipal, provincial, and federal sources totaled \$1,031,974. The overall net cost to participating municipalities was \$1,017,000.

Other Department Considerations:

Staff from the Water Resources, Planning and Regulations Services, and Finance departments contributed to the annual report.

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Watershed Services – 2024 Annual Report

March 1, 2025

Introduction

The Grand River Conservation Authority’s (GRCA) vision is of a healthy watershed where we live, work, play and prosper in balance with the natural environment. To help achieve that vision, the GRCA delivers watershed services to twenty-two participating municipalities under a Memorandum of Understanding and funding agreement. These non-mandatory programs are in addition to those mandated under the Conservation Authorities Act (CAA).

The watershed services consist of watershed sciences and collaborative planning, water quality monitoring and reporting, wastewater treatment optimization, conservation services, and subwatershed services.

Watershed Issues

The health of the Grand River and its communities continues to be influenced by stressors that shape watershed conditions and responses. These include population growth, urban area expansions, intensive agricultural production, and climate change.

In 2024, watershed programs supported GRCA and municipal responses to these watershed stressors and addressed related issues, such as elevated phosphorous and nitrogen in the watershed’s rivers and aquifers. A key concern raised by watershed municipalities is the potential impact of elevated nitrates on drinking water systems and wastewater treatment.

The GRCA’s watershed programs are guided by a [Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy](#) that was approved by the Authority in June 2024.

2024 Highlights

The GRCA’s watershed services build understanding of watershed conditions; help landowners, municipalities, and others to take action to improve watershed health; and foster collaborative problem solving across geographic and jurisdictional boundaries.

Understanding watershed conditions

- Operated nine automated water quality stations on the Grand and Speed rivers and provided real-time information about water temperature, pH level, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and conductivity on the GRCA’s [website](#).

- Installed a second sensor to continuously monitor nitrate levels at the Bridgeport water quality station on the Grand River. A similar sensor was installed at the Brant water quality station in 2023.
- Delivered subwatershed monitoring in 6 streams to support planning and implementation of urban area expansions and stormwater management, and documented stream flow and fish communities in 7 municipal drains. Supported municipalities in identifying subwatershed studies and environmental information needed to guide future growth and provided technical support for on-going subwatershed studies.
- Assessed potential point and non-point sources of nitrates in the Grand River and reported on conditions to the GRCA Board of Directors, the Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee, university researchers, and the Grand River Water Managers Working Group.

Improving water quality and watershed health

- Delivered \$932,000 in grants to landowners who implemented 270 projects to improve water quality and watershed health. Of that total, \$650,000 in grants were provided by the counties of Wellington, Brant, Haldimand, Dufferin, and Oxford, the Region of Waterloo, and the City of Hamilton. An additional \$282,000 in grants were secured from provincial and federal funding programs. These projects, worth more than \$3.5 million, help reduce nutrient, sediment, and chemical losses to the environment while maintaining or enhancing agricultural production. Many projects provide additional environmental, economic, and social benefits by improving landscape resilience to extreme weather events, sequestering carbon, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing recreational opportunities, and fostering biodiversity.
- Planted over 140,000 trees through GRCA's private land tree planting program and community tree planting events.
- Developed a [video](#) to promote grants to upgrade or decommission private wells to protect drinking water sources.
- Engaged 28 municipalities in improving the quality of treated wastewater effluent discharged to the Grand River and its tributaries. Technical workshops and site visits were held at six wastewater treatment plants and 25 plant operators were engaged in technical support and training.
- Assessed wastewater treatment plant performance for the previous year and shared the [Annual Report](#) findings at a workshop attended by more than 50 participants from 15 municipalities, contract operators, and provincial agencies. At the workshop, 14 wastewater treatment plants were recognized for producing excellent quality effluent that exceeded environmental standards.

Collaborative problem solving

- Hosted three meetings of the Grand River Water Managers Working Group. The Working Group is a network of municipal, First Nations, provincial, and federal water managers that align water supply, wastewater, stormwater, and water quality objectives and actions to achieve common watershed goals. A key topic of discussion was the potential impacts of elevated nitrates in groundwater and surface water on the quality of drinking water sources and future wastewater treatment standards.

- Provided technical input to almost twenty municipal assimilative capacity studies, wastewater master plans, water supply master plans, subwatershed and secondary plans, and climate strategies.
- Contributed to implementation of the federal-provincial Lake Erie Action Plan. The inter-agency [Grand River Water Management Plan](#), Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program, and private land stewardship programs are recognized as [key actions](#) to improve the health of the Grand River and Lake Erie.

Financial summary

The GRCA’s non-mandatory watershed services programs are funded through municipal agreements and other grants. The table below summarizes 2024 program expenses, off-setting funding, and the net cost to participating municipalities. Off-setting funds are received from provincial and federal grants, municipal funding for local or regional projects, and municipal Rural Water Quality Program capital grants for cost-share projects. Costs related to watershed sciences and collaborative planning are included in the other programs.

	Total Expenses (\$)	Funding: Municipal Apportionment (\$)	Funding: Other (\$)	Net Surplus/ (Deficit) (\$)	
Programs	<i>(a)</i>	<i>(b)</i>	<i>(c)</i>	<i>(b)+(c) less (a)</i>	
Subwatershed Services	263,253	235,000	84,495	56,242	Note 2
Conservation Services	1,313,710	539,000	821,204	46,494	Note 3
Water Quality Programs	435,243	243,000	126,275	(65,968)	Note 4
Total	2,012,206	1,017,000	1,031,974	36,768	Note 1

Note 1: Net Surplus (unspent municipal apportionment) transferred to Category 2 Stabilization Reserve.

Note 2: Wages (vacancy) \$36K under, Admin (travel) \$10K under, other expense \$10K under.

Note 3: Savings due to ability to use Special Project funding to fund program wages and admin costs instead of Category 2 municipal apportionment.

Note 4: WQ monitoring (\$12K), instrumentation supplies (\$23K) and equipment costs (\$30K) not budgeted.

For more information

Additional information on program deliverables is provided in the attached appendix and at www.grandriver.ca. The Grand River Conservation Authority’s Board of Directors received updates on water quality conditions (GM-06-24-52), the Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program (GM-12-24-122), landowner stewardship (GM-03-24-23) and land use planning in the Region of Waterloo (GM-06-24-54). These reports are available on the GRCA’s website.

Appendix: Category 2 Programs and Services Deliverables and Metrics – 2024 Summary

Watershed Sciences and Collaborative Planning

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
<p>Undertake watershed, regional, and landscape scale science and reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-disciplinary analysis and reporting on watershed health (surface water, groundwater, forests, wetlands) • Collaborative work on the hydrologic functions of natural features • Other watershed-scale science (e.g., fisheries) 	<p>Analysis and reporting on watershed conditions</p>	<p>Periodic reporting via Watershed Report Cards (e.g., 2023), Water Management Plan (e.g., State of Water Resources, 2020), technical reports, and reports to Authority board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed report cards have 5-year cycle. A report card was last produced in 2023 and is available on the GRCA's website. • Staff participated in technical subcommittee meetings for the groundwater quality component of the next watershed report card cycle. • A watershed characterization and summary of Category 2 programs were incorporated into development of the Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy (per section 6(2) of the Cat 2 MOU). The Strategy was approved by Board June 2024. • Report GM-06-24-52 to the GRCA Board of Directors regarding water quality in the Grand River watershed, with a focus on elevated nitrate levels in groundwater and surface water.
	<p>Engagement of municipal, provincial, federal, non-governmental, academic and other stakeholders</p>	<p>As below for Water Managers Working Group and via other committees and meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See below for a summary of Water Managers Working Group meetings. • GRCA staff participated in meetings of provincial-federal initiatives under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lake Erie Action Plan Implementation Team ○ Nuisance Algae Working Group ○ Lake Erie Partnership Working Group (Lake Erie Lake wide Management Plan) • GRCA contributed to reporting on implementation of the Lake Erie Action Plan and Lake wide Management Plan, as the Grand River Water Management Plan, water quality program, Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program, and Conservation Services are all listed as actions to improve the health of Lake Erie.
<p>Facilitating cross-municipal and inter-agency water resource management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support cross-disciplinary integration and inform municipal watershed planning and water, wastewater, and stormwater master planning • Liaise with First Nations, municipal, and provincial and federal agencies 	<p>Advance implementation of the collaborative, voluntary Grand River Watershed Water Management Plan. The Plan's objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sustainable water supplies for communities, economies and ecosystems • Improve water quality to improve river health and reduce the river's impact on Lake Erie • Reduce flood damage potential • Build resilience to deal with climate change 	<p>Implementation tracking/reporting (scope TBD)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report GM-12-24-122 to the GRCA Board of Directors provided an update on implementation of the Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program, a key action under the Grand River Water Management Plan (Integrated Action Plan action D2). • Report GM-03-24-23 to the GRCA Board of Directors was received regarding renewal of landowner stewardship grant funding agreements, a key action under the Grand River Water Management Plan (Integrated Action Plan action D7).

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
	Update the Water Management Plan (WMP) and Integrated Action Plan as needed	Scope/timing TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRCA undertook internal discussion and development of a project charter for scoped update of the Water Management Plan to be initiated in 2025. Next step is external consultation. • GRCA submitted an external funding proposal for scoped update to the water quality section of the Grand River Water Management Plan (pending)
	Chair the Water Managers Working Group (WMWG) with representation from watershed municipalities, First Nations, and provincial and federal agencies	Terms of Reference 2-4 meetings/workshops per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMWG TOR in place for 2023-2026 and will be renewed with scoped update of WMP • Two WMWG meetings held and one scoped meeting with targeted invitations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May 16 WMWG – Objectives were updates and discussion on new GRCA water management deliverables and the City of Kitchener’s stormwater initiatives. 25 attendees participated from 13 partners – 9 municipalities, 1 First Nation, 2 provincial agencies, and the GRCA. ○ Sept 5 – Co-hosted with Brantford, objective to update on nitrates conditions characterization in the Grand River watershed and information sharing among academics and municipalities wholly or partially reliant on surface water for water supply. 21 participants from 8 organizations, including 2 municipalities, 1 First Nation, 2 provincial agencies, and researchers from two universities. ○ Dec 10 WMWG – Objective was to explore the water supply and wastewater implications of elevated nitrates in the groundwater and surface waters of the Grand River watershed. 34 attendees participated from 16 organizations, including 10 municipalities, 1 First Nation, 2 provincial agencies, and the GRCA.
	Provide input to municipal watershed planning – local, regional, and watershed conditions and issues identification	Upon request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in and/or provided input to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waterloo Region Water Supply Strategy Update ○ Waterloo Region Climate Adaptation Working Group ○ Grey County Climate Adaptation Plan ○ Brant County Climate Action Plan ○ City of Guelph Clythe Creek Subwatershed Update Study

Water Quality Programs

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
<p>Deliver the Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program (WWOP) to support municipal wastewater management and improve and protect water quality and watershed health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support optimization of wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) operations through: knowledge sharing workshops, hands-on training, technical advice, and a recognition program Provide technical support for municipal assimilative capacity studies and master plans for water and wastewater services Engage the provincial and federal governments to develop programs to reduce nutrient loads in rivers and streams, and ultimately Lake Erie 	Collect data from municipalities, analyze, and produce an annual report on WWTP performance across the watershed.	<p># of municipalities participating in annual reporting</p> <p>Annual report posted online</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 municipalities participated in the WWOP in 2024. Annual Report on watershed-wide wastewater treatment plant performance (2023): 2023-wwtp-summary-report.pdf
	Host annual workshop for information sharing and networking among municipal wastewater practitioners	<p># of participants</p> <p>Workshop summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On November 14, 2024, GRCA hosted the Annual Workshop for the WWOP. GRCA welcomed 51 attendees (highest recorded attendance), from 15 organizations and municipalities to the GRCA head office. Report GM-12-24-122 to the GRCA's Board of Directors provided an update on the WWOP.
	Provide technical support and training workshops for operators, supervisors and managers to implement optimization techniques at individual WWTPs	<p># of training, technical support events</p> <p># of participants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 half-day Sludge Accountability Workshop was provided to the Wellington North operators at the Arthur WWTP. The training workshop was provided by GRCA and consultant CPO2 Inc. The objectives were to train operators on understanding the principles of sludge accountability (SA), how to calculate SA and the benefits of performing SA from an optimization perspective. 5 site visits were conducted at WWTPs that had a good track record of meeting GRCA voluntary targets for total phosphorous (TP). The objectives of the site visits were to survey and document best practices and to conduct dosing calculations. Site visits were conducted at Kitchener, Preston, Caledonia, Cayuga, and Brantford. The results and lessons learned from these TP surveys and site visits will be shared with all watershed municipalities in 2025, once completed. 25 staff from municipalities and operating authorities (i.e., Veolia, Ontario Clean Water Agency) participated in the technical support and training offered in 2024.
	Deliver annual recognition program to acknowledge WWTPs that participate in WWOP activities and produce a very high-quality effluent	Awards presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 total awards presented in 2024 (highest total number of awards) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Bronze (Guelph, Kitchener, New Hamburg, St. George, St. Jacobs) 6 Silver (Cainsville, Caledonia, Dundalk, Elmira, Heidelberg, Preston) 3 Gold (Ayr, Brantford, Conestogo)

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
	<p>Support municipal assimilative capacity studies and master plans for water and wastewater</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon request, facilitate initial scoping, act as liaison with MECP, provide technical/methodological advice, provide stream data, provide watershed context, participation in steering committees (but not provide comments on EAs unless related to drinking water source protection) 	<p>Studies are carried out by each municipality, as needed and GRCA staff participate at the request of the municipality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in assimilative capacity study pre-consultation meetings with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), HESL, CIMA+, and Mapleton as a technical resource. Participated in meetings on the Caledonia WWTP Schedule C Municipal Class EA with MECP, HESL, and Haldimand County as a technical resource. Provided technical support to the City of Brantford regarding outfall alternatives at the Brantford WWTP. Correspondence provided on Wellesley Water & Wastewater Master Plan Class EA. Preliminary discussion held with the Region of Waterloo regarding their upcoming Wastewater Treatment Master Plan.
<p>Surface water quality monitoring, modelling, analysis and reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate and maintain continuous water quality stations Maintain a water quality database Develop and maintain a water quality model Report on water quality and river health 	<p>Operate and maintain 9 continuous water quality monitoring stations</p>	<p>Continued operation of 9 stations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operated 9 continuous monitoring stations, collecting real-time water quality information for the following parameters: conductivity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity. GRCA installed a second continuous nitrate sensor, which was installed at the Bridgeport water quality monitoring station. There are now 2 operational nitrate sensors, one at Bridgeport and one at Brant water quality station. Water quality stations visited bi-weekly for cleaning and calibration Data made publicly available on the GRCA website and historic data available for download. Grab samples were collected from the Brant and Bridgeport water quality stations and analyzed for nitrates at an accredited laboratory for the purpose of validating GRCA continuous sensor data.
	<p>Maintain a water quality database for continuous water quality data and grab sample data from GRCA, municipal and provincial water quality sampling programs within the watershed</p>	<p>Continued maintenance of the database</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database maintained in WISKI data management platform Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) database maintained by MECP and backed up on GRCA server (GRCA data only) Historic PWQMN data were used to update scoped water quality metrics that were presented in the Grand River Water Management Plan. Nitrate characterization was updated at select sites along the Grand River and major tributaries, up to 2023, using PWQMN data.
	<p>Develop and maintain the Grand River Simulation Model (GRSM) for use in municipal assimilative capacity studies or for broader watershed planning purposes</p>	<p>GRSM is available for any municipal studies, upon request and GRCA staff will provide support for model application in assimilative capacity studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRCA initiated discussion with a provincial agency to fund a feasibility study to update the GRSM.

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
	Analyze and report on surface water quality	Reports on water quality are produced cyclically or as needed (e.g., reports to Board, watershed report cards, technical updates to Water Management Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report GM-06-24-52 to the GRCA Board of Directors regarding water quality in the Grand River watershed, with a focus on elevated nitrate levels in groundwater and surface water. A presentation of the updated nitrate characterization was presented to the Region of Waterloo, City of Brantford and invited local academics at a virtual meeting on September 5, 2024. A presentation of the updated nitrate characterization was presented to the Grand River Water Managers Working Group at the quarterly meeting on December 10, 2024.
Groundwater analysis and reporting	Analyze and report on groundwater quality	Reports on water quality are produced cyclically or as needed (e.g., reports to Board, watershed report cards, technical updates to Water Management Plan)	A presentation on nitrate in groundwater was presented to the Grand River Water Managers Working Group on December 10, 2024.

Conservation Services

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
Deliver municipal and partnership cost-share programs to support private land stewardship action to improve and protect water quality and watershed health	Provide information and resources to landowners related to stewardship action including agricultural best practices, private water well maintenance, tree planting and naturalization projects.	Number of program participants, number of landowner inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 256 landowners participated in GRCA delivered stewardship programs in 2024. Conservation Services staff responded to an additional 100+ inquiries from landowners.
	Engage watershed residents in stewardship action through promotion of cost share opportunities	Number of residents engaged through program promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private land stewardship action and GRCA cost share programs were promoted through GRCA's Landowner Grants and Resources webpages, social media, one on one extension visits (260), and displays, presentations and participation in local agricultural industry and community events (2600 participants). Total watershed resident engagement: 28,000 (estimated).
	Conduct site visits to assist landowners with planning stewardship projects and submitting applications to GRCA delivered cost share programs	Number of site visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 260 site visits were conducted to support proposed, new and existing private land stewardship projects.
	Administer and deliver municipally funded rural water quality programs (RWQP) as requested by watershed municipalities	Projects completed (number, type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal grant funding delivered on behalf of 7 municipalities: Waterloo Region, Wellington, Brant, Haldimand, Dufferin, Oxford and well decommissioning program on behalf of the City of Hamilton. 180 projects were completed with \$650,000 in municipal grants provided. The total investment in these projects is \$3 million.
		Project investment by funding source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above.
		Total grant, kg Phosphorus retained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An estimated 2,760 kg of phosphorus was retained on the landscape as a result of these projects. Projects completed prior to 2024 continue to retain phosphorus on the land. An estimated 135,000 kg of phosphorus is retained each year resulting from previously implemented RWQP projects.

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
	Seek additional partner funding to enhance cost share programs GRCA offers to watershed landowners (ie. offering funds in municipalities without a RWQP or enhancing cost share funding opportunities in areas where municipal RWQPs exist).	Projects completed (number, type) project investment by funding source, total grant, kg Phosphorus retained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding was secured by the GRCA to support private land stewardship. Sources include: Environment and Climate Change Canada Nature Smart Climate Solutions fund in partnerships with Conservation Ontario, Fisheries and Oceans Canada Habitat Stewardship Program for Aquatic Species at Risk, Forests Ontario 50 Million Tree Program, and Tree Canada. \$282,000 in grant from these GRCA-delivered initiatives supported 119 projects, including tree planting, erosion control, livestock fencing and cover crop incentives.
Facilitate private land, municipal and community partner tree planting	Conduct field surveys and site assessments to develop tree planting plans for rural landowners and community groups (for projects that meet minimum property and project size requirements)	Number of landowners engaged, number of planting plans developed, number of projects completed, number of trees planted, planting area, km of windbreak, km of riparian buffer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 168 residents requested assistance from GRCA Forestry Specialists in planning tree planting projects. 90 planting plans were developed; 81 of these private land projects were planted by GRCA contractors. 111,700 trees were planted (planting area 76 ha, 27 km windbreak and 6.5 km riparian buffer). Planting plans were also created for 13 community/municipal partner tree planting events.
	Provide technical assistance to tree planting clients to ensure successful completion of projects.	Number of landowners, projects and trees planted by landowners (plant your own projects) with Forestry Specialist support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above
	Support rural landowners to develop suitable applications to cost share programs	Summary of project investment by funding source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$410,000 in grant provided to 81 landowners to cost-share tree and planting costs for 111,700 trees on 76 ha. \$215,000 was provided from municipal Rural Water Quality Programs and \$195,000 leveraged by GRCA from other sources (Forests Ontario, Tree Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada Habitat Stewardship Program for Aquatic Species at Risk). The total cost of these projects was \$590,000.
	Secure tree stock and manage contracted planting services for landowners	Number of trees, projects, grant and investment in projects planted through GRCA planting program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Just over 140,000 trees were secured by GRCA for 243 watershed landowners. This includes 81 landowners who had planting plans developed by GRCA forestry specialists and trees planted by GRCA contractors, 13 community planting events and 149 plant your own tree orders from eligible watershed residents, many of which received technical support from Forestry Specialists.
	Serve as technical resource to landowners and community tree planting organizations	Number of community partner organizations supported; hours contributed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees for Mapleton, Trees for Woolwich, Lets Tree Wilmot, Brant Tree Coalition, Perth County Stewardship Program, Sustainable Waterloo Region, Community Living Haldimand. Estimated hours contributed = 315.
	Support community partner and municipality hosted outreach (tree planting) events as capacity permits	Number of community partners, number of residents engaged/event participants, number of events, number of trees planted, total area planted, volunteer hours contributed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 community planting events, 6,600 trees planted by 745 participant who contributed 1,500 hours, partners included Brant Tree Coalition, County of Brant, City of Brantford, Ducks Unlimited Canada, TD, Community Living Haldimand, Trees for Mapleton, Trees for Woolwich.
Coordinate education and outreach activities to promote actions to improve water quality and watershed health	Engage watershed residents through development and delivery of outreach events (tours, workshops, webinars) and participation in partner, community, and municipal events and meetings; as capacity and opportunities exist	Number of partners, events, event participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private land stewardship action and GRCA stewardship programs were promoted by Conservation Services staff at 32 events in 2024. These events were hosted or offered in partnership with 26 local organizations (municipalities, community groups, agricultural industry associations). An estimated 2,600 participants attended these events.

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
	Develop promotional materials (print, website, social media) to promote stewardship action and recruit participants to GRCA Conservation Services Programs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained GRCA website, contributed to GRCA social media content, developed “Is your well, well?” video promoting private well stewardship, posted to YouTube.

Subwatershed Services

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
Deliver a subwatershed planning program and provide technical support for municipal stream monitoring and (sub)watershed planning*	Identify and recommend (sub)watershed or other regional-scale technical study priorities	Provide a table of recommendations annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Region of Waterloo – Prioritized completion of on-going studies. Continued monitoring programs underway since 2005. Identification of new studies was put on hold pending Provincial review of proposed settlement area boundary expansions. Prioritized studies underway or recently initiated by the City of Guelph and the City of Brantford.
	Upon request and in watershed priority sequences, provide technical advice on terms of reference, scoping, methods for (sub)watershed studies.	Identify studies where support has been provided within the watershed annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Brantford and Tutela Heights Subwatershed Study (City of Brantford) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated technical review and provided GRCA requirements for floodplain mapping and public consultation. Clythe Creek Subwatershed Study (City of Guelph) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated technical review and provided GRCA advice for Regulatory Floodplain Mapping Terms of Reference. Provided recommendations for the draft Table of Contents for the Phase 1 study. Provided comment on the Draft Framework for Processing and evaluating Urban Boundary Expansion Applications (City of Hamilton). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments included technical advice for scoping and recommended methods for a Phase 1 Subwatershed Study, which is proposed to be a minimum requirement for applications. Provided technical advice and recommendations on Phase 1 Subwatershed Study general Terms of Reference. Guelph Innovation District Block 3 Terms of Reference (City of Guelph) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided technical advice based on recommendations in the Torrance Creek Subwatershed Study Management Strategy (1998). Draft Technical Memo: Subwatershed Goals, Objectives, Targets, and Draft Land Uses (City of Kitchener). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and provided technical advice on scoping the Subwatershed Study for the development of the Dundee Secondary Plan. Breslau Secondary Plan (Township of Woolwich) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended virtual meeting, provide information on work completed to date in the East Side Subwatersheds and recommendations moving forward. Erbsville North MESP (City of Waterloo) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided technical advice on the Terms of Reference for this study.

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
	Seek additional partner funding to undertake subwatershed/regional studies	Identify the number of applications, specifics, success and financial information annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured federal funding (\$10,000) from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to classify previously unclassified municipal drains in the County of Brant using DFO's municipal drain classification system. This data could inform future characterization of a subwatershed and input to the development of monitoring plans for consolidated linear infrastructure approvals. Successfully sampled 7 municipal drains and 9 independent drain segments. Sampling included specific parameters for flow characteristics and fish community sampling.
	Review and provide input to watershed, regional and local scale subwatershed studies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate on steering committees, working groups Scope of technical review in compliance with O. Reg 596/22 - Prescribed Acts 	Number of requests and reviews undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clythe Creek Subwatershed Study: Technical Advisory Group (City of Guelph) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in Workshop #3 and #4, focusing on calibration of the hydrologic model (Workshop #3) and modeling future land use scenarios (Workshop #4). North Brantford and Tutela Heights Subwatershed Study (City of Brantford) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated technical review and provided GRCA comments on hydrologic and hydraulic models. Participated in working group with City and consultant regarding hydrologic modelling. Randall/Breslau Drain Engineered Floodplain mapping (Region of Waterloo) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated technical review and provided GRCA comments on engineered floodplain mapping for Randall and Breslau Drains, which was approved by GRCA General Membership on June 28, 2024. Participated on the Mohawk Lake Steering Committee (City of Brantford).
	Provide technical support and advice on municipal stream monitoring.	Number of plans reviewed and location within watershed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mill Creek Subwatershed Study Implementation (City of Cambridge, Township of Puslinch): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support provided for the Mill Creek Ranger program, University of Guelph Department of Integrative Biology, and Friends of Mill Creek. Results for STREAM benthic macroinvertebrate sampling collected in 2023 provided in 2024. Provided technical support and advice for the City of Kitchener for the proposed city-wide weather station implementation. Completed water quality sampling on Blair Creek (City of Kitchener) on behalf of the MECP for a chemical compound known to be toxic to salmonids. Provided technical support and advice to the City of Brantford on scoping the monitoring of a prairie fen.
	Serve as digital custodian for previously completed subwatershed studies (listed on GRCA website) Respond to requests for digital copies of previously completed subwatershed studies from consultants and the public.	Upon request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRCA website updated to include recently completed studies available to the public. Responded to 97 requests from municipalities/consultants/public for digital copies of previously completed studies.

Programs and Services Description	Deliverables	Metrics	2024 Watershed-wide Summary
<p>*Undertake subwatershed monitoring for watershed and regional scale subwatershed studies where services are cost-shared between the municipalities and the GRCA under separate agreements. May undertake monitoring for local scale subwatershed studies where 100% funding provided by municipal under separate agreement.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blair Creek (City of Kitchener): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administered annual monitoring program completed by GRCA staff and consultants. ○ Consolidated data and provide annual monitoring report. • East Side Lands Subwatersheds (cost-shared with Region of Waterloo, monitoring sites within City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, and Township of Woolwich): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Administered monitoring program completed by GRCA staff ○ Consolidated data and provide annual monitoring report. • Completed Randall/Breslau State of the Watershed update (Region of Waterloo) – to be submitted in 2025. • Jones Creek Monitoring – finalized and sent water quality data to the City of Brantford. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completed monitoring in 2024 ○ QA/QC and consolidate data

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-33

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Annual Report of Compliance with requirements under Ontario Regulation 41/24

Recommendation:

THAT the Annual Report of Compliance with requirements under Ontario Regulation 41/24 be approved and posted on the Grand River Conservation Authority website.

Summary:

As a result of changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Ontario Regulation 686/21, all Conservation Authorities (CAs) are required to prepare and make public an annual report outlining statistics on permits, including reporting on the level of compliance with requirements of Ontario Regulation 41/24. Conservation Ontario has developed a document that includes a template for the Annual Report to meet the legislative requirements.

The Grand River Conservation Authority's (GRCA) first Annual Report is included as Appendix A and will be posted on the GRCA website. According to available data, approximately 70% of the permits submitted were deemed complete within 21 days of submission, a decision was made within 90 days for approximately 80% of major permits submitted, and a decision was made within 30 days for approximately 80% of minor permits submitted. Of note, the reporting is based on calendar days and does not account for when the application is on "hold" and awaiting a response from the applicant on staff comments provided. To improve these numbers, several actions are being implemented in 2025, including procedural and process improvements and a new permit and planning database which is utilized by other CAs.

Report:

On April 1, 2024, the *Conservation Authorities Act* was amended, bringing into force new legislative and regulatory requirements associated with Conservation Authority (CA) permitting as outlined in [Report GM-03-24-27](#). In addition, Ontario Regulation 686/21 (Mandatory Programs and Services) under the *Conservation Authorities Act* was amended on April 1, 2024, to include annual reporting requirements for CAs. Further to section 8.1 of the Regulation, all CAs are required to prepare and make public an annual report outlining statistics on permits, including reporting on the level of compliance with requirements of Ontario Regulation 41/24 (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits) respecting the application for and issuance of permits, including any associated timelines.

In addition to reporting on permit statistics and timelines, the Annual Report provides details on:

- Public availability and annual review of CA mapping;
- Completion of administrative reviews (within 30 days following a request); and
- Number of applications subject to a Minister's Order.

The first Annual Report is attached as Appendix A and only includes permits submitted on or after April 1, up to December 31, 2024, and a corresponding decision was made with respect to the permit in the same time period. This reflects permit applications received and decisions made pursuant to the amended legislation and regulation.

Permit Application Review Timelines

Timelines associated with CA permit reviews are specified in Section 7 of O. Reg. 41/24 and under Section 28.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. The CA Act and O. Reg. 41/24 outline two distinct timelines associated with CA reviews of permit applications as follows:

- Upon receipt of an application and applicable fee, the CA has to notify the applicant in writing within 21 calendar days whether the application is deemed a “complete application” which means that all required plans/reports needed for staff to review and process the application have been provided.
- Once an application is deemed “complete”, the CA will complete their review and make a decision (approve, approve with conditions, recommend refusal). Per Subsection 28.1 (22) of the CA Act, if the CA has not made a decision within 90 calendar days, the applicant may appeal the application directly to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) on the basis of a non-decision. Alternatively as outlined in GM-01-25-01, pursuant to Ontario Regulation 474/24, an applicant may instead request the Minister of Natural Resources where the proposed activity pertains to or supports a matter of provincial interest, to issue an order to prevent a CA from issuing a permit and take over the permitting process, or to review a CA permit decision (refusal or object to conditions imposed on approval). Rather than appeal to the OLT or the Minister, the applicant is encouraged to reach out to GRCA’s client service facilitators (Supervisors of Planning and Regulations Services) to inquire on review status and resolve outstanding matters.

Conservation Ontario (CO) has prepared a guidance document titled “Annual Reporting Guidance and Template – Permit Timelines and Regulatory Compliance” to ensure consistency in reporting for all CAs. This document outlines best practices related to service delivery and provides a reporting template to facilitate collection of comparable data amongst the CAs for reporting to the Conservation Ontario Council.

Following the CO guidance document, for the purpose of reporting on permit decision timelines, applications are to be categorized as either a major or minor permit application. The GRCA has three types of permit categories: minor, standard, and major. To align with the recommended CO reporting template, minor and standard permits are grouped together and reported as minor applications. The best practice timelines associated with these permit categories are as follows:

- Once an application is deemed complete, the CA has 30 days to make a decision for a minor application and 90 days to make a decision for a major application.

As shown in Appendix A, approximately 70% of the permits submitted were deemed complete within 21 days of submission, a decision was made within 90 days for approximately 80% of major permits submitted, and a decision was made within 30 days for approximately 80% of minor permits submitted. Information on the methodology used for reporting based on available data is further discussed below. Of note, the reporting is based on calendar days and does not account for when the application is on “hold” awaiting a response from the applicant on comments provided.

Administrative Review Timelines

As part of the Annual Report, the number of requests for administrative reviews received and whether reviews are completed within the regulatory timelines of 30 days is reported. Requests for administrative reviews will be completed by the Chief Administrative Officer. Section 8 of O. Reg. 41/24 provides that an applicant may request a review of an application if:

- The applicant has not received notice whether their application is deemed a complete application within 21 days;
- The applicant disagrees with the GRCA’s determination that the application is incomplete; or,
- The applicant believes the GRCA’s request for other information, studies, or plans is unreasonable.

The GRCA has not received a request for administrative review during the reporting period.

Mapping

Section 4 of Ontario Regulation 41/24 requires that CAs develop maps showing regulated areas that are available at the head office and online, and that mapping is reviewed at least annually. The GRCA is in compliance with these requirements as maps are available in the Administrative Centre and online. Quarterly mapping updates are undertaken in addition to amendments based on specific project needs (i.e., floodplain mapping updates). It is important to note that the description of regulated areas in the *Conservation Authorities Act* and O. Reg 41/24 prevail over the areas mapped.

Minister's Order Timelines

The CO reporting template includes the number of applications subject to a Minister's Order. As outlined in GM Report GM-03-24-27 and GM-01-25-01, further to Section 28.1.1 of the CA Act, and subject to Ontario Regulation 474/24, the Minister (Ministry of Natural Resources) may where the proposed activity pertains to or supports a matter of provincial interest, issue an order to:

- Direct a CA not to issue a permit to a person who wishes to engage in an activity that, without a permit, would be prohibited under section 28 of the CA Act; or,
- Direct a CA or CAs to not issue permits to any persons who may wish to engage in a type or class of activity that, without a permit, would be prohibited under section 28 of the CA Act, for a specified period of time.

Where such an order is made, the Minister will assume responsibility for any permitting needs. CAs are not required to track timeliness associated with these permits and will only report on the number of applications subject to such orders in a given year.

The GRCA has not received a Minister's Order during the reporting period.

Discussion of Methodology and Results

100% compliance was not achieved with the legislative requirement to inform the applicant whether their application is complete or incomplete within 21 days, or with best practice timelines related to decision timelines for permitting.

Regarding notification of complete application, there is insufficient data recorded on when applications were deemed complete or incomplete, therefore this report is conservatively based on the number of permit applications that were approved within 21 calendar days of submission. This methodology underestimates compliance achieved as notice was given on more files than recorded.

For the minor permits, the 30-day timeline is calculated from when the application was deemed complete and excludes the time awaiting a response from the applicant on comments provided. There was insufficient data to follow this methodology, therefore the reporting is based on the number of calendar days between date of submission and date of approval (with or without conditions). Of the 75 permits over the timeline of 30 days, 50% were approved within 48 days. The longest approval time was 197 days for an application that was submitted without pre-consultation and initially did not meet policy. This application was "on hold" for 148 days while awaiting a response from the applicant on comments provided.

For the 1 major permit that was over the timeline of 90 days, a decision was made within 92 days after receipt of a complete application. Of those 92 days, the application was "on hold" for 18 days awaiting a response from the applicant to comments provided.

The key reasons for variance from the timelines are summarized in Appendix A and outlined below:

- Service disruption due to staffing shortages which resulted in delays. The Planning and Regulations Department has experienced staff vacancies for the majority of 2024.
- Data Entry Issues. Insufficient information was available on when an application was deemed complete/incomplete and the length of time awaiting a response from the applicant. This resulted in conservative numbers being utilized that may show higher non-compliance than what occurred.

Efforts will be undertaken in 2025 to improve compliance with the legislative requirements as well as service delivery best practices. Procedural and process improvements have been and will continue to be developed and implemented. Revisions have been made to the existing database to better capture when applications are deemed complete or incomplete, completion of a pre-consultation checklist is underway to assist with the submission of complete applications, additional training has occurred, standard operating procedures for permit data entry, file management, and prioritization will be developed, and automated permit timeline notification reminders to staff have been implemented. The internal approval process will be reviewed, and interim internal reporting be implemented, including the development of additional performance measures. A new database will be implemented for the GRCA and is anticipated to aid in data entry and reporting.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Technical support for permit review is provided by the Engineering Department – Flood Operations staff. On a file specific basis, support from other departments is provided, primarily from the Senior Hydrogeologist and Watershed Ecologist.

Prepared by:

Beth Brown
Manager of Planning and Regulations Services

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Annual Report of Compliance with requirements of Ontario Regulation 41/24

Annual Reporting – Permit Statistics	
NOTE – Numbers below are based on when permit was approved (with or without conditions) rather than when permit was issued (conditions satisfied)	
Total Permits Approved (Overall) (April 1 – December 31): Total permits approved in 2024 = 626	420
Total Major Permits Approved (April 1 – December 31):	6
Total Minor Permits Approved (April 1 – December 31):	414
Total Applications Subject to Minister’s Order (Minister’s Review):	0
Annual Reporting – Permit Timelines	
COMPLETE APPLICATION REVIEW Total complete application reviews completed in 21 days:	297
PERMIT TIMELINES (MAJOR) Total Major Permits approved <u>Within</u> Decision Timeline (90 Days):	5
PERMIT TIMELINES (MAJOR) Total Major Permits approved <u>Outside</u> Decision Timeline (90 Days):	1
PERMIT TIMELINES (MINOR) Total Minor Permits approved <u>Within</u> Decision Timeline (30 Days):	339
PERMIT TIMELINES (MINOR) Total Minor Permits approved <u>Outside</u> Decision Timeline (30 Days):	75
VARIANCE FROM TIMELINES Reason for Variance from Timelines:	Service disruption due to staffing shortages Data Entry Issues
PERMIT TIMELINES (AVERAGE – ALL) Overall Average Permit Review Timeline :	23 days
PERMIT TIMELINES (AVERAGE – MAJOR – 90 DAYS) Average Major Permit Review Timeline:	37 days
PERMIT TIMELINES (AVERAGE – MINOR – 30 DAYS) Average Minor Permit Review Timeline:	23 days
Annual Reporting – Compliance with O. Reg. 41/24	
MAPPING Are maps of regulated areas available at the CA head office and on the CA website? (ss. 4(1) of O. Reg. 41/24)	Yes GRCA mapping is available online at: Map Your Property Grand River Conservation Authority
MAPPING Has the Authority undertaken an annual review of the mapping and made necessary updates? (ss. 4(2) of O. Reg. 41/24)	Yes GRCA undertakes quarterly updates to regulatory mapping.
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS Total requests for administrative reviews made to the Authority:	0
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS Total administrative reviews completed within 30 days of the request:	Not applicable

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-26

Date: March 28, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Current Watershed Conditions as of March 18, 2025

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-26 – Current Watershed Conditions as of March 18, 2025 be received as information.

Summary:

Precipitation in February ranged from 113 percent of normal at Environment and Climate Change Canada's Brantford Airport climate (Brantford) to 183 percent at the Luther climate station. On average, precipitation was above normal for February across the watershed. As of March 18, 3-month indicators for precipitation are showing around 130 percent normal at the 8 climate stations overall.

Recorded temperatures at Shand, Luther, Shades, and Brantford show that the average temperature across the watershed was around 0.4 degrees Celsius colder than normal in February. March has been warmer with temperatures at the Shand Dam climate station around 3.3 degrees Celsius above the long-term average for the first half of March.

The large reservoirs are being used to minimize downstream flooding from a significant snowmelt event that began on Friday, March 14. Run off from the melt event was used to fill the reservoirs and they are following the operational rule curves for this time of the year.

The large reservoirs will continue to serve their primary functions of flood storage and low flow augmentation.

Lake Erie is just above the long-term average.

The seasonal forecast over the next three months is for above normal temperatures for the watershed and above normal precipitation to the east and south of the watershed.

Report:

Precipitation

Compared to the long-term average for February, precipitation at climate stations across the watershed ranged from 113 percent at Brantford to 183 percent at Luther with an overall average of around 152 percent at all eight climate stations. Winter storms resulted in large amounts of snowfall throughout the watershed in February and the recorded precipitation was mostly snow.

Compared to the long-term average for half of the month of March, precipitation in the first 18 days of March ranged from 108 percent at Brantford to 186 percent at Shand with an overall average of around 136 percent at climate stations across the watershed. Data is shown in Table 1.

A lot of snow remained in the northern half of the watershed when snow measurements were completed on March 14 as part of the Ministry of Natural Resources Snow Survey Program. The measured snow water equivalent (SWE) was above the respective long-term average for March 15 at all sites in the north half of the watershed. Snow in the southern half of the watershed ranged from normal to no snow. A map of the results is shown in Figure 1.

Trends in precipitation, as presented in Table 2, show that over the past 3 months, the watershed has experienced above normal precipitation overall. Precipitation amounts ranged from around 93 percent at Brantford to 155 percent at the Luther climate station with an overall average of around 130 percent. Over the past 6 months, the watershed experienced drier than normal conditions with an average of around 85 percent overall. Over longer periods of 12 to 18 months recorded precipitation is close to normal long-term averages overall. A visual representation of these trends for the Shand climate station is provided in Figure 2.

Table 1: Current monthly precipitation for climate stations across the watershed up to the morning of March 18, 2025.

Climate Station	Current Month Precipitation (mm)	Long Term Average Precipitation (mm)	Percentage of Long-Term Average (%)
Shand	55.2	29.7	186%
Conestogo	35.1	31.1	113%
Guelph	43.4	28.8	151%
Luther	49.8	32.0	156%
Woolwich	31.9	25.2	126%
Laurel	38.9	29.7	131%
Shades	37.3	30.7	121%
Brantford	28.7	26.6	108%

Table 2: Precipitation trends as a percentage (%) of the long-term average over the last 18 months.

Climate Station	Last Month	Last 3 Months	Last 6 Months	Last 12 Months	Last 18 Months
Shand	156%	136%	89%	108%	101%
Conestogo	145%	147%	94%	102%	94%
Guelph	168%	134%	86%	104%	97%
Luther	183%	155%	102%	112%	102%
Woolwich	148%	132%	85%	97%	97%
Laurel	135%	129%	82%	98%	90%
Shades	171%	117%	78%	106%	98%
Brantford	113%	93%	64%	98%	95%

Air Temperatures

Recorded temperatures in February at Luther, Shand, Shades, and Brantford were around 0.4 degrees Celsius colder than the long-term average at the stations, overall. Temperatures in the first 18 days of March were warmer than average with temperatures at the Shand Dam and Shades Dam climate stations over 3 degrees Celsius above the long-term average for the first half of March. A visual representation of these trends for the Shand climate station is provided in Figure 3.

Lake Erie Water Levels

During February, the average lake level was 0.05 meters above the long-term average and 0.36 meters below last year. As of March 16, the mean water level in Lake Erie was around 0.02 meters above the long-term average and 0.29 meters below March 2024.

The most probable forecast for Lake Erie is for lake levels to transition towards a seasonal increase, closer to the long-term average. Figure 4 shows the observed water levels starting in 2021 as well as the range of water levels expected over the next five months. Less than 50 percent of Lake Erie is covered by ice; there is ice cover at the outlet of the Grand River.

Reservoir Conditions

The four large reservoirs were used to minimize downstream flooding from a significant snowmelt event that began on Friday, March 14. The event was driven by warm temperatures combined with rain and a near record, dense snowpack. Much of the existing snowpack melted during the event and produced very high runoff. The reservoirs were used to reduce peak flows downstream. Run off from the melt event was used to fill the reservoirs and they are following the operational rule curves for this time of the year.

The first phase of the Conestogo Dam project concluded in mid-December and the next phase of the project will begin in late spring or early summer of 2025. The GRCA concluded a maintenance project on Shand Dam at the end of February.

As of mid-March, there is roughly 25 percent available flood storage at Shand and Conestogo. Year to date reservoir levels and operating rule curves are shown in Figures 5 and 6 for the four largest reservoirs.

River Ice Conditions

Cold temperatures at the beginning of the year resulted in ice formation on many of the watercourses throughout the watershed. Ice conditions were actively monitored. Warm temperatures along with the recent snowmelt event have diminished most of the ice cover throughout the watershed.

Low Water Response

Precipitation and streamflow data will continue to be monitored along with groundwater level data.

Long Range Forecast

Environment and Climate Change Canada is forecasting above normal temperatures for the watershed and above normal precipitation to the east and south of the watershed over the 3 months of March, April, and May 2025.

Flood Preparedness and Flood Centre Activities

The GRCA flood operations center issued one flood message in February:

- Watershed Conditions Statement - Issued Friday, February 28, 2025, at 4:45 PM

Eight flood messages were issued in March, so far:

- GRCA Flood Message - Flood Watch - Issued Monday, March 3, 2025, at 12:00 PM
- GRCA Flood Message - Flood Watch - Issued Monday, Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 12:30 PM
- GRCA Flood Message - Combined Termination of Flood Watch/Watershed Conditions Statement - Issued Monday, Monday, March 10, 2025, at 2:00 PM
- GRCA Flood Message - Flood Watch - Issued Friday, March 14, 2025, at 4:30 PM
- GRCA Flood Message - Combined Flood Warning and Flood Watch - Issued Saturday, March 15, 2025, at 2:15 PM
- GRCA Flood Message - Combined Flood Warning and Flood Watch - Issued Saturday, March 15, 2025, at 6:45 PM

- GRCA Flood Message - Combined Flood Warning and Flood Watch - Issued Sunday, March 16, 2025, at 3:00 PM
- GRCA Flood Message – Watershed Conditions Statement - Issued Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 11:30 AM

A reservoir operator and river watch training session was held on February 26 and a special flood coordinators meeting was held on March 4.

Conditions are being monitored closely. Staff continue to hold weekly meetings as part of planning initiatives, dam operations, and flood emergency preparedness.

Training sessions for dam operators and field staff will be conducted as needed.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable

Prepared by:

Liz Fisher
Water Management Supervisor

Approved by:

Vahid Taleban, P. Eng
Manager of Flood Operations

Figure 1: Map of Grand River Watershed Snow Survey Results for March 14, 2025

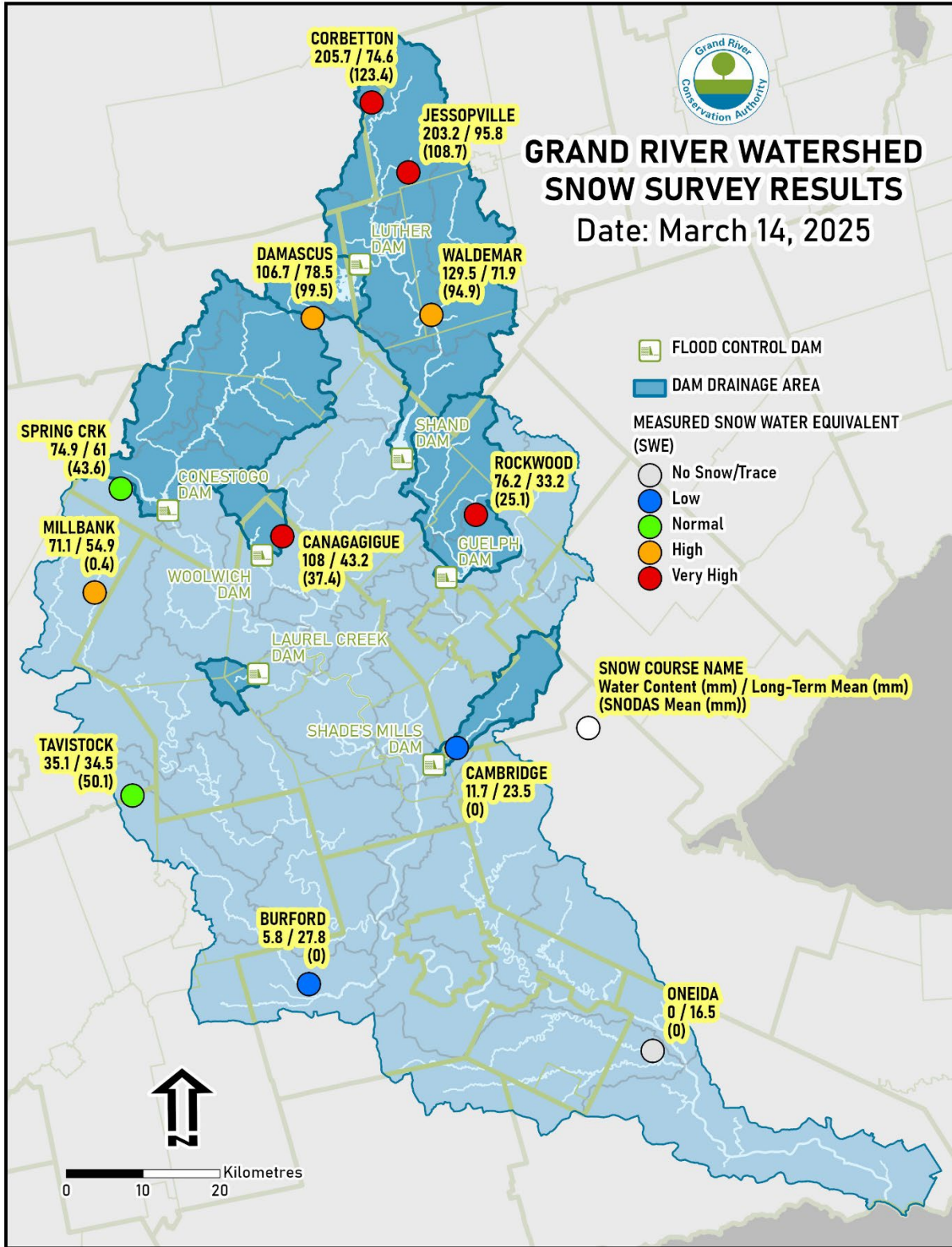


Figure 2: Shand Dam Monthly Precipitation 2021 to March 18, 2025

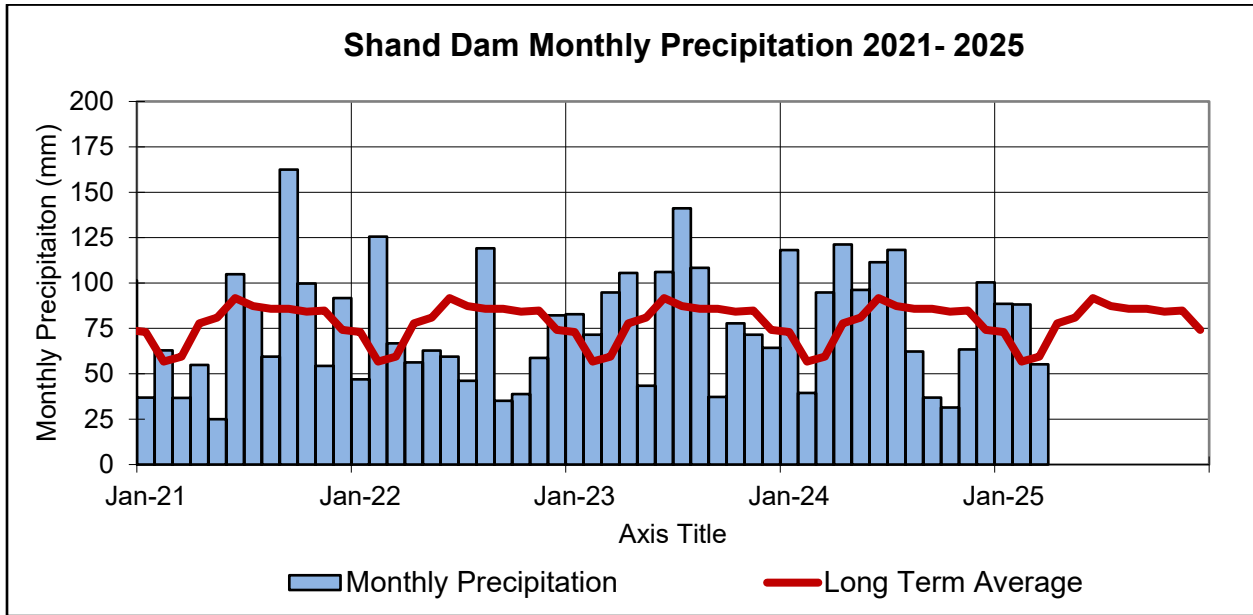


Figure 3: Monthly Average Air Temperatures at Shand Dam from 2021 to March 18, 2025

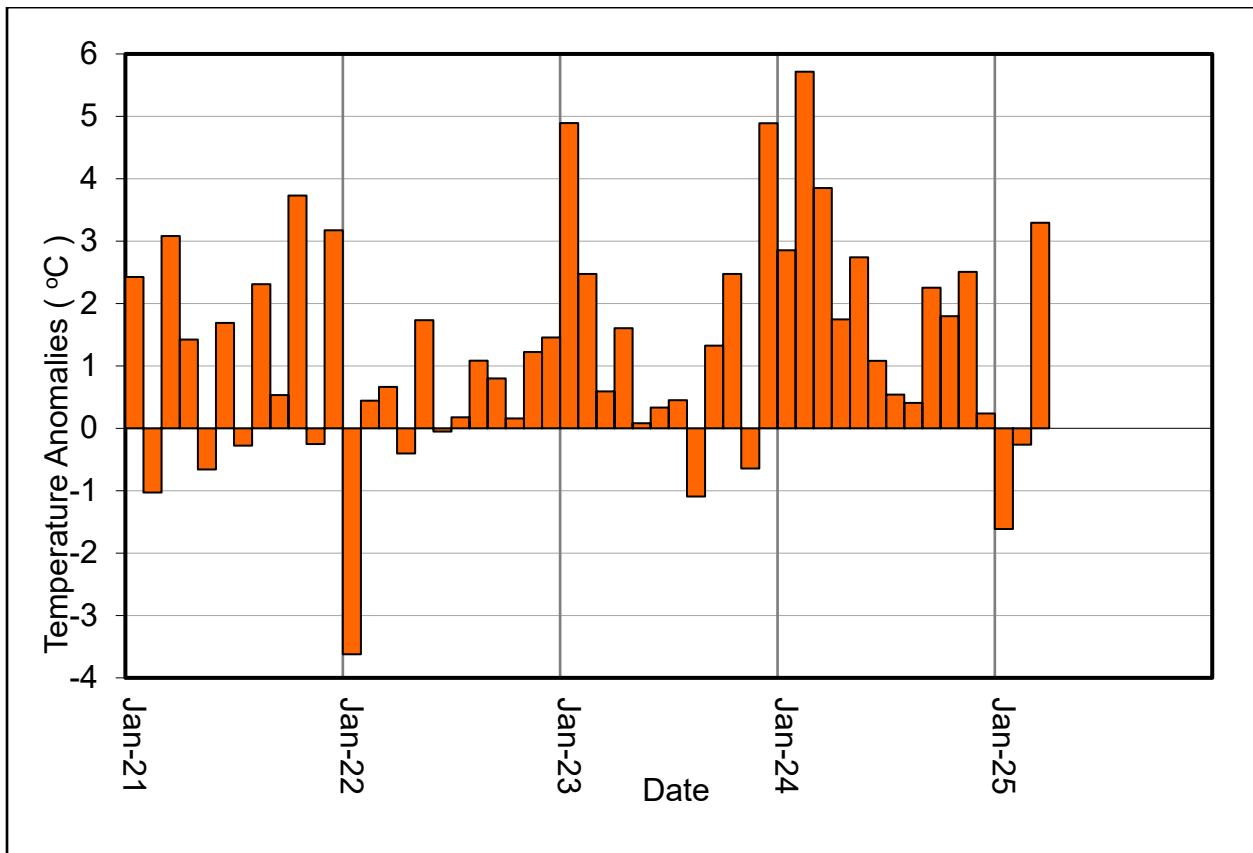


Figure 4: Water levels for Lake Erie at Port Colborne

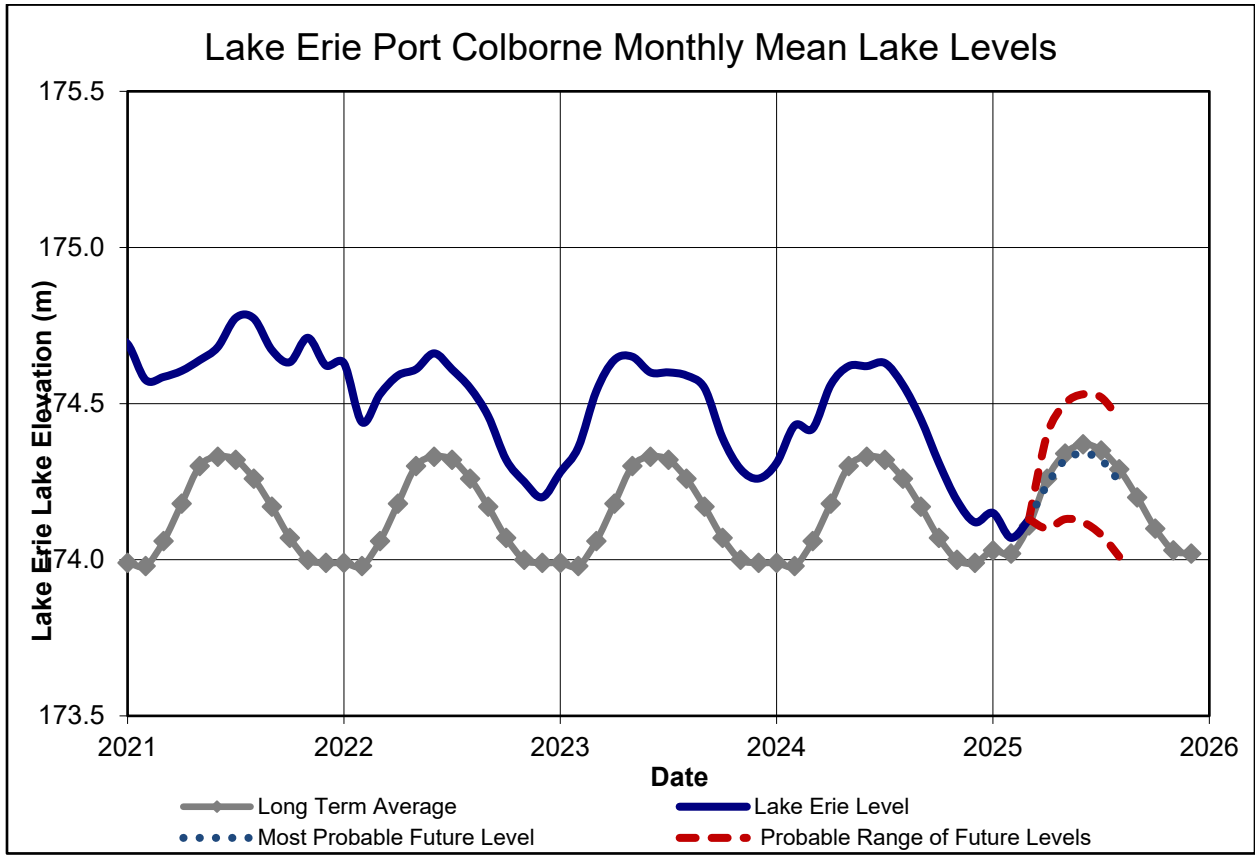


Figure 5: Shand and Conestogo Reservoir Elevation Plots for 2025

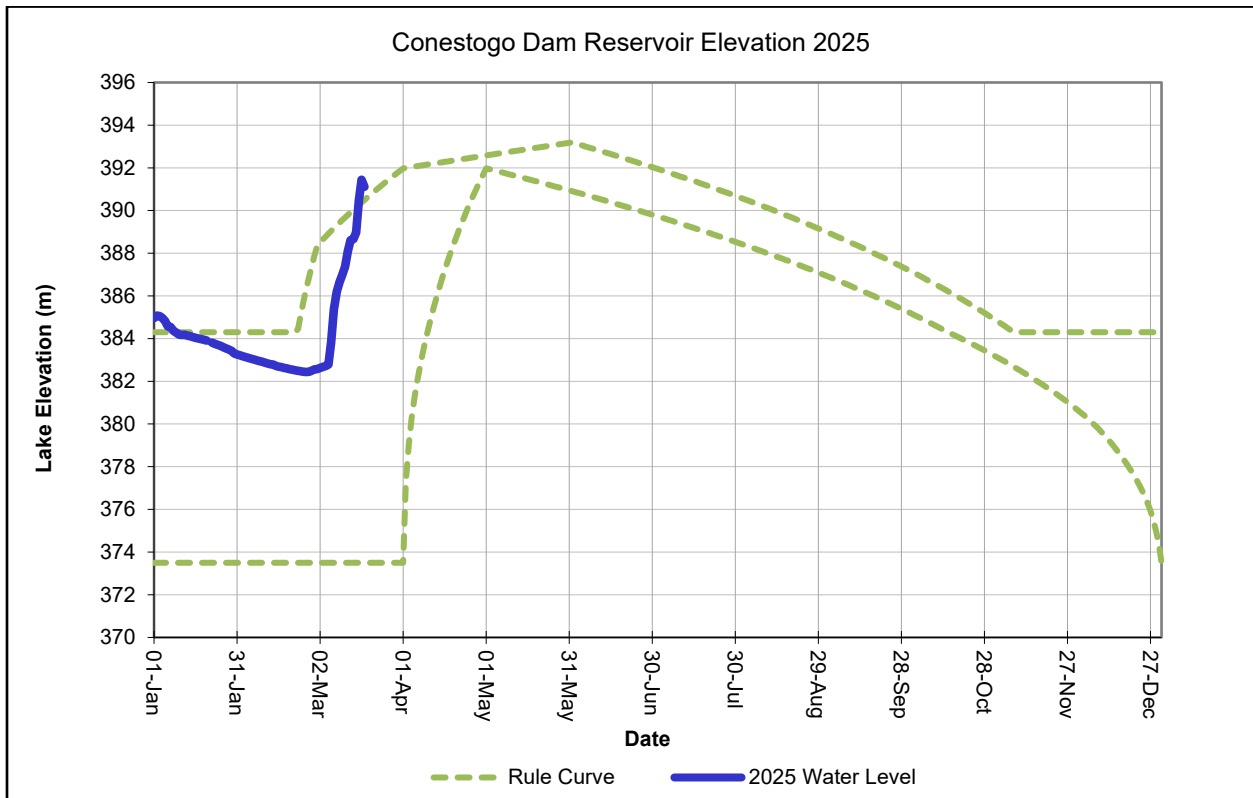
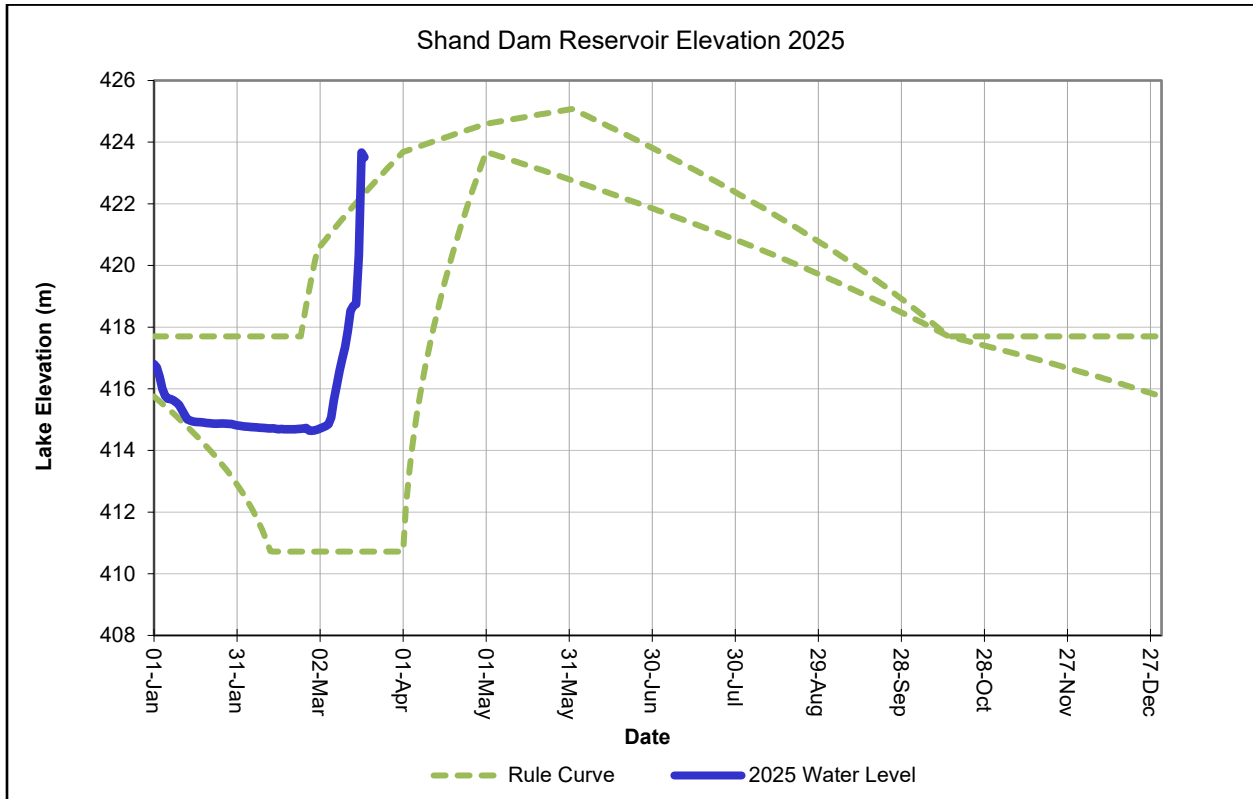
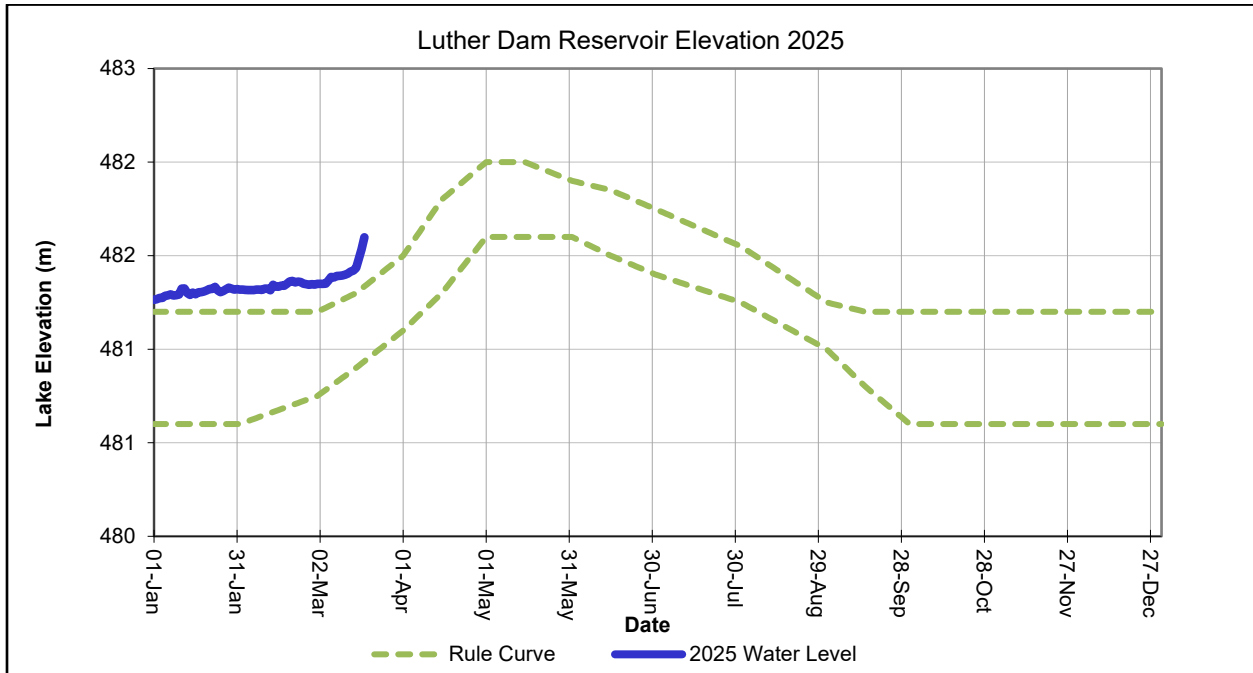
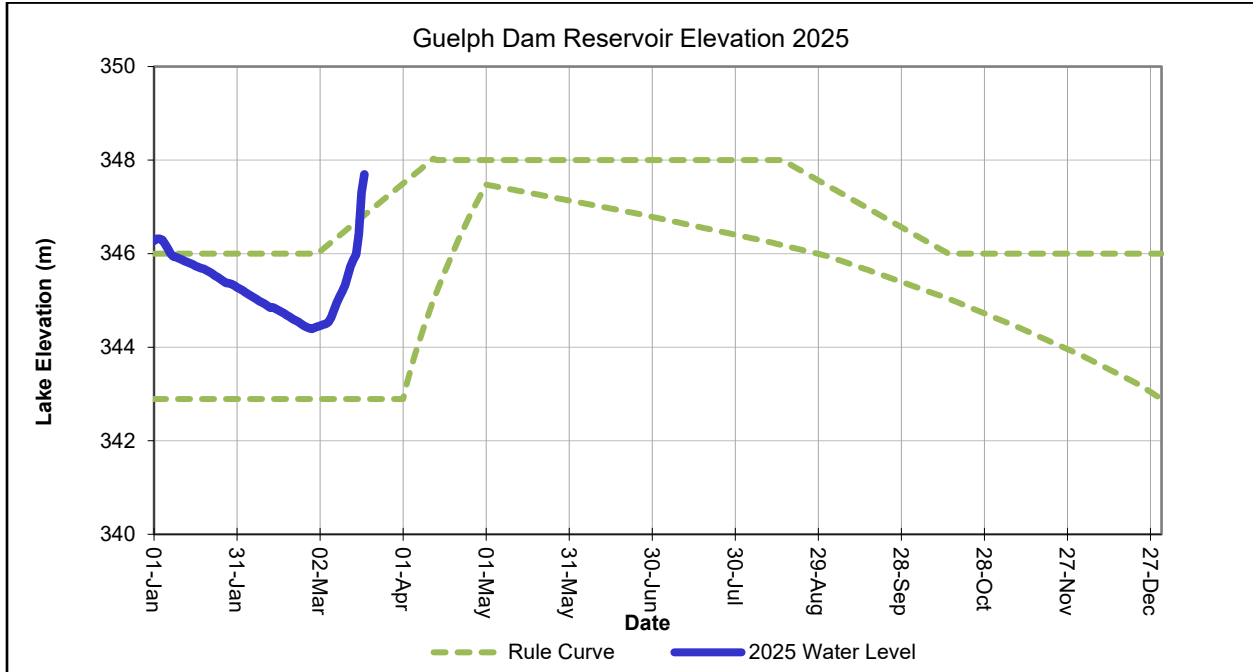


Figure 6: Guelph and Luther Reservoir Elevation Charts for 2025



Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-03-25-34

Date: March 29, 2025

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-03-25-34 – Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System be received as information.

Summary:

As a result of significant snowfall during the months of January and early February, a special Spring Flood Coordinators meeting was held on March 4, 2025. The program included a review of the roles of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), Police and municipal Flood Coordinators in response to flooding. Presentations relating to the GRCA Flood Warning System, the GRCA's recently approved Ice Management Plan, and Roles and Responsibilities for Flood Communications were provided by GRCA staff. Trudy Kidd from Environment and Climate Change Canada provided an overview of severe weather events over the past three months and a look ahead at the long-term weather forecast.

A total of 168 attendees participated in the March 4, 2025 virtual Flood Coordinators meeting. Municipal Flood Coordinators, Municipal Police, Ontario Provincial Police, Environment Canada, Province of Ontario, neighboring Conservation Authority staff and GRCA staff attended the meeting. One reason for initiating a pre-winter meeting is to ensure all contact information is up to date heading into the winter season with the intention of being as prepared and organized as possible.

Report:

The Grand River Conservation Authority held a pre-winter Flood Warning Emergency Planning Meeting in 2024. The meeting was held on December 5, 2024, and delivered in-person at the GRCA Administration Centre Auditorium. The purpose of the pre-winter meeting was to ensure contact information is up-to-date heading into the winter and spring flood season. The meeting also provides participants with a forecast of the anticipated flood risk based on watershed conditions. During January and the first half of February, the watershed received a significant amount of snowfall and experienced temperatures below seasonal averages. Many watercourses in the watershed were covered with a strong layer of ice.

The combination of near-record snowfall and colder temperatures, along with the forecasted warmer temperatures for late February coupled with rainfall, increased the risk of flooding, specifically due to potential ice jams. To provide an update to municipal emergency management coordinators in the watershed, a special flood coordinators meeting was planned for Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Due to the short notice, the meeting was held virtually to facilitate participation for all emergency management coordinators. A copy of the meeting agenda is included at the end of this report.

Presentations relating to the program included a brief discussion on the role of the GRCA, Police and municipal Flood Coordinators, details of the GRCA Flood Warning System, Flood Management Program Updates, roles and responsibilities for Flood Communications, the

recently approved Ice Management Plan, and Current Watershed Conditions, including the Spring 2025 flood outlook.

Trudy Kidd, a warning preparedness meteorologist from Environment and Climate Change Canada, provided a presentation reviewing the predicted and observed conditions over the months of November and December of 2024 and January and February of 2025 and provided an outlook for the months of March, April and May 2025. Warm conditions have been in forecast for spring, along with moist conditions possible for the month of March. Moths of April and May have been forecasted to be normal with respect to precipitation.

As part of the current conditions presentation, results of the Grand River watershed snow survey results conducted on March 3, 2025, were presented. The northern and middle portions of the watershed were observing high and very high levels of snow and snow water content compared to long-term averages, respectively. Snow depth in the watershed was the highest over the past 10 years and similar levels had been observed in years 2001 and 2014.

A river watch program was conducted on Monday, February 24 and Monday, March 3, to verify the river conditions across the watershed and spot and identify any potential ice jams. The results of the observations were presented at this meeting. Many watercourses were observed to be covered with ice, but no significant frozen-in ice jams had been identified. A comparison between the conditions leading to historical ice jam flooding in Brantford in 1996 and 2018 with current conditions was provided, and it was concluded that while there is a moderate risk of ice jam and consequential flooding, the risk is determined to be lower than what occurred in 1996 and 2018.

A total of 168 attendees participated in the March 4, 2025 virtual Flood Coordinators meeting. Participants included members of the following organizations and agencies: Municipal Flood Coordinators and municipal police from within the watershed, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Municipal and Provincial Police, Provincial Ministries, Other Conservation Authorities staff, and GRCA staff. Information about the number of attendances for the current and previous meetings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Attendance for 2023, 2024, and 2025 Municipal Flood Coordinators Meetings

Agencies Represented	2025 Mar. Attendance (Virtual)	2024 Dec. Attendance (In-Person)	2023 Dec. Attendance (In-Person)	2023 Feb. Attendance (Virtual)
Municipal Flood Coordinators	86	25	29	63
Municipal Police	6	2	1	3
Ontario Provincial Police	7	0	2	6
Provincial Ministries	2	0	2	3
Federal Agencies	5	3	5	5
Other Conservation Authority staff	9	0	9	13
News Media	0	0	0	0
GRCA Staff	31	34	19	35
Other	2	0	1	8
Total Persons in Attendance	148	64	68	136

Financial Implications:

Not Applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not Applicable.

Prepared by:

Vahid Taleban, P. Eng.
Manager of Flood Operations

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer



Grand River Conservation Authority Flood Warning Emergency Planning Meeting Tuesday, March 04, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Presenter	Presentation	Time
1. Shawn Watters Vice-Chair Grand River Conservation Authority Board of Directors	Opening Remarks	2:00 – 2:05 p.m.
2. Katelyn Lynch Manager of Water Control Infrastructure Grand River Conservation Authority	GRCA Flood Warning System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding in the Grand River Watershed • Role of the GRCA • Role of Municipality and Municipal Flood Coordinator • Role of police • GRCA's Flood Warning Guide 	2:05 – 2:15 p.m.
3. Vahid Taleban Manager of Flood Operations Grand River Conservation Authority	Ice Management Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of reservoirs and dikes to reduce flooding • Updates to reservoir operations 	2:15 – 2:35 p.m.
4. Lisa Stocco Manager of Strategic Communications and Environmental Education Grand River Conservation Authority	Flood Communications – Roles and Responsibilities	2:35 – 2:50 p.m.
5. Trudy Kidd Warning Preparedness Meteorologist Environment and Climate Change Canada	Weather Recap: Reflecting on past seasons and looking ahead	2:50 – 3:05 p.m.
6. Vahid Taleban Manager of Flood Operations Grand River Conservation Authority	Current Conditions	3:05 – 3:15 p.m.
7. Samantha Lawson CAO Grand River Conservation Authority	Closing Remarks	3:15 – 3:20 p.m.