



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

Friday, April 26, 2024

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. Chair's Remarks

4. Review of Agenda

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

5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of March 22, 2024 be approved as circulated.

7. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

8. Hearing of Delegations

a. Phil Monture, Six Nations of the Grand River

9. Presentations

10. Correspondence

- a. City of Guelph - 2025 Budget Confirmation Guideline 9

THAT Correspondence from the City of Guelph regarding their 2025 Budget Confirmation Guidelines be received as information.

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

12. Reports:

- a. GM-04-24-38 - General Insurance Renewal 2024-2025 11

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-38 – General Insurance Renewal – 2024-2025 be received as information.

- b. GM-04-24-40 - Cash and Investment Status 15

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-40 – Cash and Investment Status – March 2024 be received as information.

- c. GM-04-24-41 - Financial Summary 17

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending March 31, 2024 be approved.

- d. GM-04-24-34 - Conestogo Lake Conservation Area Septic Upgrades 21

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) award the tender for the Conestogo Lake Conservation Area Septic System Upgrades to Weber Environmental Services d/o 1159473 Ontario Limited for the amount of \$206,072.00 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total budget of \$230,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

- e. GM-04-24-33 - ERO Posting 019-8462 - Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument 23

THAT the Conservation Authorities Act Regulations Committee be authorized to approve staff comments on ERO Posting 019-8462– Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument on behalf of the GRCA General Membership.

- f. GM-04-24-39 - ERO Posting 019-8320 - Regulation Detailing New Minister's Permit and Review Powers 24

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-39 – Regulation detailing new Minister's Permit and Review powers under the Conservation Authorities Act be approved and submitted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario.

- g. GM-04-24-37 - Fee Policy Amendments 27
- THAT amendments to the Grand River Conservation Authority Fee Policy as outlined in this report be approved and implemented effective April 26, 2024;
- AND THAT amendment to Fee Schedule 2 – Conservation Area Programs and Services be approved and implemented effective April 26, 2024;
- AND THAT amendments to Fee Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulations Fees be approved and implemented effective April 26, 2024.
- h. GM-04-24-32 - Permits Issued under Ontario Regulation 150/06 46
- THAT Report Number GM-04-24-32 – Permits Issued under Ontario Regulation 150/06 be received as information.
- i. GM-04-24-36 - Kayanase Restoration Work at Arkell-Smith 47
- THAT Report Number GM-04-24-36 – Kayanase Restoration Work at Arkell-Smith be received as information.
- j. GM-04-24-35 - Draft Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy 50
- THAT Report Number GM-04-24-35 – Draft Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy be received as information;
- AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority direct staff to undertake consultation on the draft Strategy;
- AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority send a letter to participating municipalities, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to advise them of the consultation period on the draft Strategy.
- k. GM-04-24-42 - Current Watershed Conditions 78
- THAT Report Number GM-04-24-42 – Current Watershed Conditions as of April 16, 2024 be received as information.

13. Committee of the Whole

14. General Business

15. 3rd Reading of By-Laws

16. Other Business

17. Closed Meeting

THAT the General Membership enter a closed meeting in accordance with the *Municipal Act section 239(2)* for the following purpose(s): proposed or pending acquisitions or dispositions, and litigation or potential litigation.

- a. Disposition of Land - Township of Guelph/Eramosa
- b. License Agreement - Land Use
- c. Litigation or potential litigation

18. Next Meeting - May 24, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

19. Adjourn

THAT the General Membership Meeting be adjourned.

20. Grand River Source Protection Authority Meeting

Regrets only to:

Office of the CAO, Phone: 519-621-2763 ext. 2200



Grand River Conservation Authority Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date: March 22, 2024
Time: 9:30 am
Location: Hybrid Meeting of the General Membership
GRCA Administration Centre
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present Bruce Banbury, Christine Billings, Gino Caputo, John Challinor II, Ken Yee Chew, Brian Coleman, Doug Craig, Kevin Davis, Mike Devine, Jim Erb, Susan Foxtan, Guy Gardhouse, Gord Greavette, Lisa Hern, Colleen James, Daniel Lawrence, Dave Miller, Natasha Salonen, Sandy Shantz, Rob Shirton, Jerry Smith, Shawn Watters, Chris White, Kari Williams, Pam Wolf

Regrets Alex Wilson
Staff Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Beth Brown, Krista Bunn, Brandon Heyer, Janet Ivey, Murray Lister, Katelyn Lynch, Sonja Radoja, Lisa Stocco, Vahid Taleban, Pam Walther-Mabee, Benjamin Cheng, Melissa Larion, Nick Randle, Eowyn Spencer, Ron Wu-Winter

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:30 a.m.

2. Certification of Quorum

The Secretary-Treasurer certified quorum with more than half of the Members present. A total of 25 Members attended the meeting.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed the Members and made the following remarks:

- Ernie Ritz, a former GRCA Board member in the early days of the organization, and Mayor of Wilmot Township, passed away on March 13. Ernie was a well-respected political figure and historian in Wilmot Township. Our condolences to the Ritz family.
- On Monday, March 11 GRCA staff attended Wellington North Township Council meeting to answer questions on the approved GRCA Budget.
- The annual stocking of brown trout in the Grand and Conestogo Rivers has been coordinated between the Friends of the Grand River, the Conestogo River Enhancement Workgroup, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Stocking dates are between April 29 and May 3, and if any Board members are interested in attending this hands-on volunteer event, please reach out to E.Spencer for registration information.

G.Greavette and K.Chew joined the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

4. Review of Agenda

24-41

Moved By Shawn Watters

Seconded By Susan Foxtan

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

Carried

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 Meetings

24-42

Moved By Gord Greavette

Seconded By Ken Yee Chew

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of February 23, 2024 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

The Chair noted that the Guelph Lake Nature Centre tender will be discussed later in the agenda.

24-43

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT Correspondence from Paul Salvini, Chair of the Grand River Conservation Foundation regarding support for the Guelph Lake Nature Centre, and from the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry regarding Provincial Offences Act Officer designations be received as information.

Carried

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

None.

12. Reports:

12.a GM-03-24-26 - Cash and Investment Status

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-44

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Lisa Hern

THAT Report Number GM-03-24-26 – Cash and Investment Status – February 2024 be received as information.

Carried

12.b GM-03-24-29 - Financial Summary

- J.Challinor inquired about the January financials and S.Radoja noted that they've been incorporated into the year-to-date. The January report was not included in last month's

agenda package as information was being reformatted to align with the new budget framework.

- D.Miller inquired about monies borrowed from the general capital reserve and if it had been repaid, and S.Radoja confirmed in the affirmative.

24-45

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Jerry Smith

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending February 29, 2024 be approved.

Carried

12.c GM-03-24-18 - Guelph Lake Nature Centre Tender Award

- The Chair provided a brief overview of the history of this project, noting that fundraising efforts began over ten years ago. In 2020 the project was paused, and the proposed building has subsequently been redesigned to better suit the education program and to reflect the need to reduce project costs due to increased construction expenses as well as a fundraising shortfall.
- The Chair confirmed the request for funding from the GRCA will not impact the municipal apportionment, and S.Radoja reiterated that staff will be requesting funds from the Land Sale Reserve from the Province.
- D.Miller thanked staff for providing the detailed report and for reducing the scope of the project when the need arose, and inquired about depleting the reserves, interest fees, and ongoing operational costs considering the current review of the education program and other nature centres.
- S.Radoja responded to the finance questions, noting that the reserve is in a strong position for this use and that interest fees on the loan can be decided by the Board now or in the future.
- L.Stocco continued, noting that ongoing operational costs had been considered as part of the overall vision of the program review. The new GLNC building is located within the Guelph Lake Conservation Area which provides operational efficiencies and reduced program costs because it will be a shared facility.
- S.Shantz asked if there is a timeline to repay the funding, and the Chair noted a specific timeline has not been determined, but the Foundation's commitment to continue fundraising has been confirmed and shared with this Board via correspondence from the Foundation Chair.

24-46

Moved By Shawn Watters

Seconded By John Challinor II

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the Guelph Lake Nature Centre to Dakon Construction Ltd. for the amount of \$2,041,000.00 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total budget of \$2,350,000.00 excluding HST be approved;

AND THAT the General Capital Reserve be utilized to fund the Guelph Lake Nature Centre building project up to a maximum of \$1,100,000.00;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority requests permission from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to utilize funds from the Land Sale Proceeds Reserve for the Guelph Lake Nature Centre building project.

Carried

G.Caputo joined the meeting at 9:44 a.m.

12.d GM-03-24-16 - 2024 Replacement Vehicle Purchase

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-47

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Susan Foxtan

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2024 Ford F150 XL Crew Cab 4x4 Hybrid ½ ton pickup truck for a total amount of \$73,773.00 (excluding HST) from Parkway Ford Sales Ltd;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2024 Ford 1 Ton Cab and Chassis for a total amount of \$65,505.00 (excluding HST) from Parkway Ford Sales Ltd;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase two 2024 Toyota Rav 4 Hybrid SUVs for a total amount of \$86,161.76 (excluding HST) from Parkway Motors-Red Hill Toyota.

Carried

12.e GM-03-24-17 - Road Site Preparation and Surface Treatment Tender

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-48

Moved By Doug Craig

Seconded By Daniel Lawrence

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the 2024 road site preparation and surface treatment to Cornell Construction Limited of Brantford, Ontario up to the amount of \$455,600.00 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total project budget of \$550,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

Carried

12.f GM-03-24-19 - Monitoring and Maintenance of Alarm Systems, CCTV, and Control Access Systems

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-49

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Christine Billings

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority enter into an agreement for Monitoring and Maintenance of Alarm Systems, CCTV, and Control Access Systems to Garda Alarm Services Corporation for a term of three years and an option to extend the assignment for up to one additional three-year term;

AND THAT a total budget of \$250,000.00 excluding HST be approved which includes the three-year alarm monitoring assignment, emergency repairs, potential upgrades to security infrastructure and a contingency.

Carried

K.Williams joined the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

12.g GM-03-24-20 - Byng Island Concession Stand to Washroom Renovation

- R.Shirton asked if any of the bids received were from local companies, and if there is any concern regarding service interruption due to the timing. B.Heyer responded that location is not an item that's typically noted in the bid process, and that minimal disruption is anticipated for day-use and camping at Byng.

24-50

Moved By Shawn Watters

Seconded By Rob Shirton

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the Byng Island Concession Stand to Washroom Renovation to Abcott Construction Ltd. for the amount of \$240,555.00 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total budget of \$280,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

Carried

12.h GM-03-24-21 - 2024-2026 Cottage Lot Curbside Garbage and Recycling Materials Collection, Processing, and Disposal Contract

- In response to a question, S.Lawson noted that three years is a typical contract for this work.
- J.Erb asked about the change in municipal legislation that stipulates that they are not responsible for garbage pick-up, and if the GRCA falls under that. S.Lawson responded that as the GRCA is a private landowner, and the requirements for this fall under the terms of the lease.

24-51

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By John Challinor II

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the contract for curbside garbage and recycling materials collection, processing, and disposal services for 2024, 2025, and 2026 to Provincial Waste Systems Inc.

Carried

N.Salonen joined the meeting at 9:54 a.m.

12.i GM-03-24-24 - Conservation Areas Revenue and Expenses

- P.Walther-Mabee provided an overview of the revenue and expenses of GRCA Conservation Areas (CAs). The presentation highlighted how the conservation areas program is designed to ensure that user fees cover operating costs and that annual surplus revenue from individual CAs is pooled and allocated to a capital maintenance reserve. Corporate overhead costs are not allocated to the conservation areas program.
- The reserve fund is used for unforeseen major repairs and maintenance to existing infrastructure, and to support stabilization in years where user fees may be insufficient to cover costs. It was also noted that conservation area staff provide additional staff support to other departments and watershed programs, and as a result, a portion of wages are allocated to other programs. Significant synergies are realized through this business model.
- S.Radoja continued the presentation to provide a detailed breakdown of the overall revenues and expenses by conservation area, as well as a breakdown of net operating results and capital maintenance spending over five years at each of the conservation areas. This part of the presentation highlighted the variance in revenue between the many CAs, as well as different maintenance requirements from year to year.
- P.Walther-Mabee finished the presentation with information related to comparable CAs and campgrounds, noting that this program aligns with the GRCA's strategic priority number three, to connect people to the environment through outdoor experiences, which is done in balance with maintaining watershed natural resources.

24-52

Moved By Gord Greavette

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT Report Number GM-03-24-24 – Conservation Areas Revenue and Expenses be received as information.

Carried

12.j GM-03-24-25 - Seasonal Camping Program and Byng Island Seasonal Camping Plan Update

- P.Walther-Mabee provided an overview of the Seasonal Camper Guidebook and agreement that provides a framework for the seasonal camping program. The guidelines were created to promote standardization across the conservation areas (CAs) that offer seasonal camping, as well as operational improvements, and mitigation of risk and liability.
- The GRCA began the transition to implement the guidelines in applicable CAs in 2018. A full compliance target date of 2025 has now been set, recognizing that COVID impacted this transition and changes to the program take time for both staff as well as seasonal campers. Staff have communicated the changes to seasonal campers each year, and improvements are already being realized to reach the goals of the program outlined in the guidelines.
- At Byng Island Conservation Area, significant changes are required to bring the seasonal sites into alignment with the updated program requirements. Further review of the sites at Byng resulted in additional measures being taken to improve the overall camping experience, which includes relocating the seasonal sites out of areas most at-risk for flooding. Seasonal campers have been provided with ongoing communication to keep them informed of pending changes, and the full implementation of the guidelines is expected to be completed by the end of the 2025 season.
- R.Shirton thanked staff for the presentation and for keeping board members from Haldimand County informed during this process. R.Shirton suggested that a public information meeting be held in Haldimand to provide a question-and-answer period for campers affected by the changes. The Chair noted that staff would take the suggestion into consideration.
- There was some further discussion related to whether there are similar concerns at other CAs, and if there are historical concerns with seasonal campers attempting to remain at the sites year-round. P.Walther-Mabee responded to questions, noting that other CAs have for the most part completed the transition to the guidelines but that each CA had unique challenges and levels of change, and that seasonal agreements end when the campsites close in mid-October so year-round tenancy has not been a concern at the CAs.

24-53

Moved By Dave Miller

Seconded By Jim Erb

THAT Report Number GM-03-24-25 – Seasonal Camping Program and Byng Island Seasonal Camping Plan Update be received as information.

Carried

12.k GM-03-24-27 - Implementation of Legislative and Regulatory Changes under the Conservation Authorities Act - Ontario Regulation 41/24

- S.Lawson provided a brief overview of the report, highlighted that Ontario Regulation 41/24 is the replacement for 150/06, which was the regulation that governs the GRCA's input and requirements for development in floodplains and alterations to wetlands and watercourses. Each conservation authority had their own regulation prior to the new regulation.
- Regulation 150/06 was repealed as part of the overall changes to the Conservation Authorities Act, but the new governing regulation was not immediately put into force. The updated regulation reinforces the focus for conservation authority input about natural hazards and is intended to improve consistency across Ontario conservation.
- The new regulation will impact processes currently in place which will now be reviewed, as well as the appeal process for permit holders, and provides the Minister with powers to issue permits.
- Implementation of the new regulation will begin April 1, and in the meantime, staff are working to update related policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the legislation.
- There was some discussion from the Board related to the changes, including the reduced regulated area and whether that will impact the volume of permit applications, and if new

mapping will be available. B.Brown responded to questions, noting that staff are anticipating a change in the volume of applications but the impact on resources remains unknown until it has been experienced for some time. A letter has been sent to our municipalities to advise them when and where the updated mapping will be available.

24-54

Moved By Shawn Watters

Seconded By Mike Devine

THAT amendments to Grand River Conservation Authority's mapping of natural hazards and their associated regulated areas to implement Ontario Regulation 41/24 be approved;

AND THAT the Interim Policy Guidelines for the Administration and Implementation of Ontario Regulation 41/24 (Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits) be approved;

AND THAT the delegation of powers as outlined in Appendix B be approved.

Carried

12.l GM-03-24-28 - Proposed By-law 1-2024

The changes to the By-law include amendments to align with Ontario Regulation 41/24. There were no questions or concerns raised.

24-55

Moved By Jerry Smith

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT By-law 1-2024 be read a first, second, and third time and adopted by the General Membership, to take effect on April 1, 2024;

AND THAT By-law 2-2023 be repealed on April 1, 2024;

AND THAT a copy of By-law 1-2024 be forwarded to the Ministry of the Natural Resources and Forestry and posted on the Grand River Conservation Authority's website.

Carried

12.m GM-03-24-23 - Landowner Stewardship Grant Funding Agreement Renewals

D.Miller noted his support and the benefits of the Rural Water Quality Program, and commended staff for the work that goes into keeping it going.

24-56

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Kari Williams

THAT Report Number GM-03-24-23 Landowner Stewardship Grant Funding Agreement Renewals be received as information.

Carried

12.n GM-03-24-22 - Bridgeport Dike Capacity Improvement Environmental Assessment Study Contract Budget Increase

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-57

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Jim Erb

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority approve an increase to the Contract with KGS Group of \$141,524, excluding HST;

AND THAT a total project budget increase for the Bridgeport Dike Capacity Improvement Environmental Assessment Study in the amount of \$160,000, excluding HST be approved.

Carried

12.o GM-03-24-31 - Requests for Proposals - Engineering Consulting Services, Permits and Plan Review

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-58

Moved By Pam Wolf

Seconded By Susan Foxton

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority accept the proposal from Stantec Consulting Limited to carry out engineering consulting services up to the amount of \$150,000 excluding HST.

Carried

12.p GM-03-24-30 - Current Watershed Conditions

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

24-59

Moved By Shawn Watters

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT Report Number GM-03-24-30 – Current Watershed Conditions as of March 12, 2024 be received as information.

Carried

13. Committee of the Whole

Not required.

14. General Business

There was no General Business.

15. 3rd Reading of By-Laws

None.

16. Other Business

None.

17. Closed Meeting - Not required.

18. Next Meeting - April 26, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Susan Foxton

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer

March 28, 2024

Chair Chris White
Board of Directors
Grand River Conservation Authority

Dear Chair White,

RE: 2025 Budget Confirmation Guideline

Guelph's 2025 budget was adopted as part of the 2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget (MYB) at a net tax levy increase over 2024 of 9.80 per cent.

The budget update and confirmation process is a pulse check done each year after a full multi-year budget is adopted. It provides Council with the opportunity to review what was planned and work in an agile and flexible way to adjust for the current environment, including new direction from the Mayor or Council.

On February 28, a [Mayoral Direction](#) was released directing staff to prepare an update to the adopted 2025 operating and capital budget with a property tax impact of no more than four (4) per cent. The property tax impact must be split proportionately between the City and local boards and shared services agencies. An information report will be provided to Council on April 5, 2024 with more details around the City's plan to achieve the target as directed.

What does this mean for you?

2025 Budget Confirmation

Your 2025 adopted budget falls within the parameters required to achieve the Mayoral Direction.

Budget Update and Confirmation Process

For the 2025 Budget Confirmation, the City is separating the budget adoption process into two phases: City budget adoption and local boards and shared services agencies budget adoption. Local boards and shared services agencies will present their 2025 budget updates to Council for adoption in January 2025, after the City's budget has been formally adopted. The City will share more information about the detailed budget schedule in the months ahead.

The City requests that all local boards and shared services agencies plan to engage with the community during their respective Board budget review, prior to final Board approval. New this year, City staff will look to amplify the public delegation opportunities at your public budget board/committee meetings in response to Council's feedback from this past budget process. Please keep us informed as you map out your budget processes and meeting dates.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact Stephanie Devost at stephanie.devost@guelph.ca.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,



Scott Stewart, C.E.T
Chief Administrative Officer
City of Guelph
519-822-1260 extension 2221
scott.stewart@guelph.ca

c. Mayor Cam Guthrie, Councillor Christine Billings, Councillor Ken Yee Chew, City of Guelph Executive Team, City Treasurer, Tara Baker, City Clerk, Stephen O'Brien, GRCA CAO, Samantha Lawson

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Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-38

Date: April 26, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: General Insurance Renewal – 2024-2025

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-38 – General Insurance Renewal – 2024-2025 be received as information.

Summary:

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) obtains general insurance as part of a group consisting of 34 Conservation Authorities and Conservation Ontario. The policies run from April 1 to March 31. The policy terms, renewals, loss reviews, and other administrative matters are overseen by the Conservation Ontario General Insurance and Benefits Committee (Insurance Committee), which consists of 10 senior staff from Conservation Authorities (including GRCA) and the General Manager of Conservation Ontario. This Committee reports to Conservation Ontario Council and, in addition to carrying out several ongoing risk management activities, the committee reviews and approves renewal terms annually.

The Insurance Committee met with Marsh in March to review the proposed coverage and premiums for 2024-2025, and the committee approved the April 1, 2024 renewal as recommended by Marsh. A summary of GRCA's 2024-2025 premiums is included below. In total, GRCA's insurance premiums will increase by \$43,679, or 6.77%, with total premiums for the policy period of \$689,294, excluding HST.

Report:

Background

The Insurance Committee was formed in 1986 on the basis that obtaining coverage through a group rather than individually provides better value, allows the sharing of administration costs and risk management experience/expertise, and helps to offset the impact of significant claims that may arise at one Authority. The GRCA was one of the founding members of the group.

Marsh is the current insurance broker for the Conservation Ontario group and, since being appointed in 2014, they have negotiated many favourable renewals. Marsh provides ongoing service to all Conservation Authorities and staff at the GRCA have found significant value in their practical expertise on risk management matters, and assistance with claims management.

2024-2025 Renewal

Market conditions created tough negotiations for insurance renewals in recent years. Since 2019, the insurance market has been considered a hard market due to record-breaking years of global catastrophes, increased frequency and severity of natural disasters, and a continuing and escalating litigious environment. These factors have not improved over time, and have been compounded by geopolitical conflict, inflation, and the economy in general and so the insurance market has been slower to soften compared to historical market cycles.

Despite this, the overall renewal was favourable with an overall group renewal rate decrease of -3.5%. The GRCA's increase is 6.77%, which is less than the 10-15% average increase for public entities. The GRCA's renewal rates are higher than the overall group largely due to an

increase in insured values of property, equipment, and vehicles. The insured assets listing is reviewed annually and updated to reflect increased replacement values, new construction and modifications, dispositions, etc. Some infrastructure assets such as culverts and retaining walls are not included in the insured asset listing. This is being reviewed and adjustments may be made during the 2025 renewal process.

It is also important to note that the risk profile for Conservation Authorities does reflect high susceptibility to weather-related, vandalism, and fire damage claims. In addition to increased insurance premiums, many insurers have also restricted coverage, or reduced available limits as additional methods to control their exposure.

A list of the current insurance policies, with carriers noted, and a summary of the coverage provided is attached as Appendix A.

Risk Management Program

Another service that Marsh provides to the Conservation Ontario group is a risk management program. This program provides significant value to the Conservation Authorities. This team conducts risk assessments to determine the largest drivers of losses to help Conservation Authorities make informed operational decisions and prioritize risk management spending and they develop guidance documents on a variety of risk management topics relevant to Conservation Authorities.

The Marsh risk management team has performed on-site assessments at several GRCA properties to identify site-specific risks and challenges to make recommendations for improvements to mitigate and reduce risks.

Financial Implications:

Since the policies are purchased at a group level, several formulas are used to allocate the premiums to the 34 Conservation Authorities in the group. The formulas are designed to measure the relative risk exposures at the individual Conservation Authorities. Due to changes in the reported numbers in the statistics used (revenue, hectares of owned and managed land, number of permit and planning files, number of Conservation Area visitors, Nature Centre classes, etc.), the portion allocated to an individual Conservation Authority will vary each year.

In total, the GRCA's insurance premiums will increase by \$43,679 or 6.77% in the 2024-2025 term over the 2023-2024 rates. This reflects increases in insurance premiums, increases in property and asset values, and other exposures. Details of the cost changes in the policies are as follows:

POLICY	2023-2024	2024-2025	Change	% Change
Commercial General Liability (CGL)	\$181,891	\$185,091	\$3,200	1.76%
Umbrella Liability	\$47,602	\$47,403	(\$199)	-0.42%
Property	\$241,124	\$274,779	\$33,655	13.96%
Errors and Omissions	\$103,938	\$106,754	\$2,816	2.71%
Directors and Officers' Liability	\$6,461	\$8,076	\$1,615	25.00%
Automobile	\$50,165	\$51,709	\$1,544	3.08%
Equipment Breakdown	\$7,047	\$8,095	\$1,048	14.87%
Crime	\$878	\$878	\$0	0.00%
Cyber	\$6,509	\$6,509	\$0	0.00%
Total Premium with Group	\$645,615	\$689,294	\$43,679	6.77%

In addition to the insurance premiums referenced above, there is a brokerage fee of \$31,618, which is held constant from last year, and tax on most lines of insurance (excluding automobile).

Marsh's brokerage fee had been held constant for 10 years before a 5% increase was implemented in 2023

The 2024 budget for insurance expenses is \$809,000. The forecast insurance expense (calendar year) will be decreased by \$45,000 to \$764,000 as a result of the premiums which came into effect on April 1, 2024 (partial year impact in 2024). A forecast adjustment will be brought to the Board when the invoice is received, and the allocation assessment has been completed.

Other Department Considerations:

All departments provide input to the renewal documents to ensure adequate coverage for all of GRCA's properties and activities.

Prepared by:

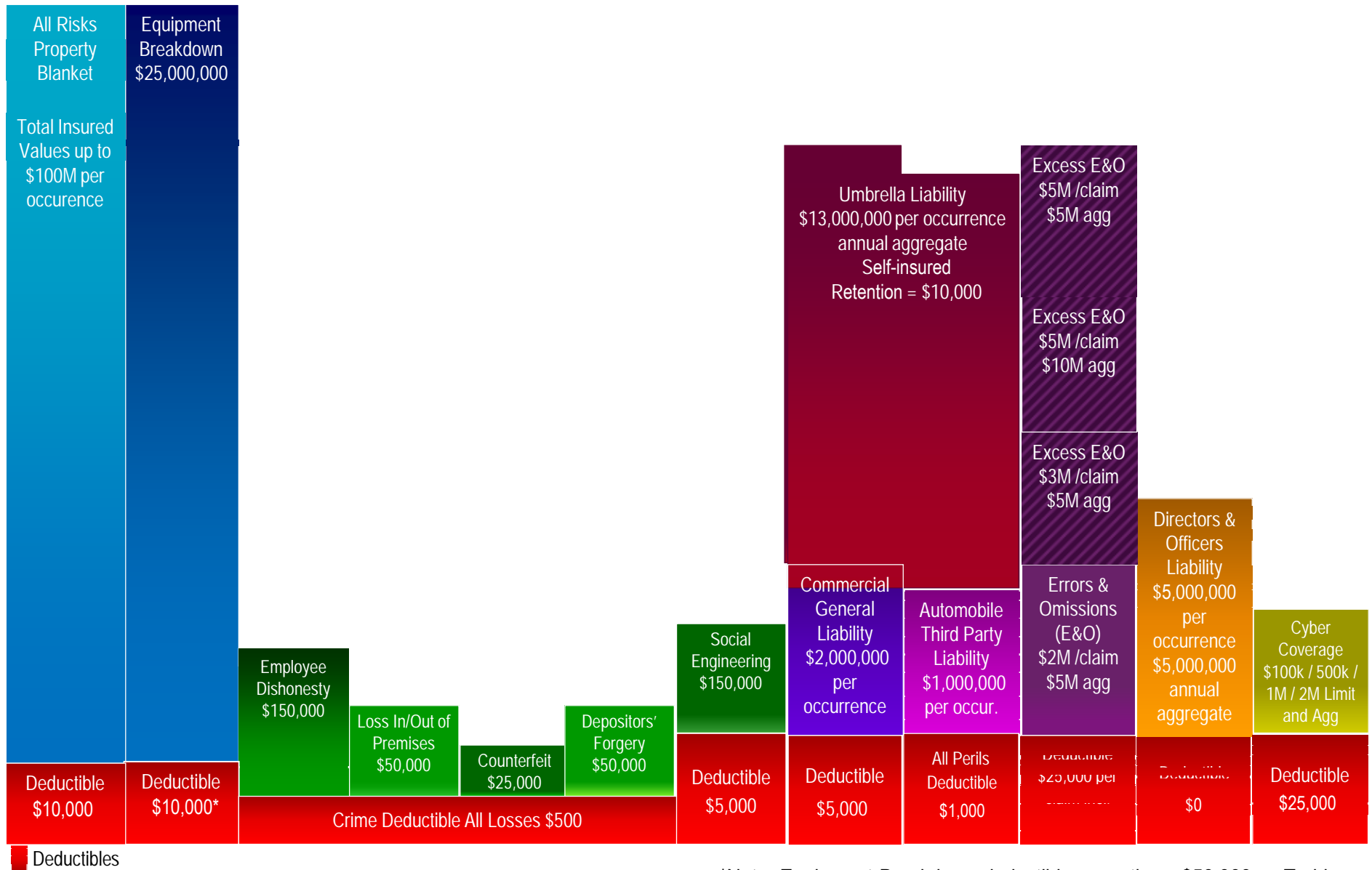
Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO, Secretary-Treasurer

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Program Structure

GRCA Coverage Overview



*Note: Equipment Breakdown deductible exception - \$50,000 on Turbines

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-40

Date: April 24, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Cash and Investment Status – March 2024

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-40 – Cash and Investment Status – March 2024 be received as information.

Summary:

The cash position including Notes Receivable of the Grand River Conservation Authority as at March 31, 2024 was \$60,018,582 with outstanding cheques written in the amount of \$265,742.

Report:

See attached.

Financial Implications:

Interest rates, etc. are shown on the report.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Prepared by:

Racha Ibrahim
Senior Accountant

Sonja Radoja
Manager of Corporate Services

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO/Secretary Treasurer

**Grand River Conservation Authority
Cash and Investments Status Report
March 31, 2024**

BANK ACCOUNTS	Location	Type	Amount	Interest Rate
	CIBC	Current Account	10,982,096	5.40%
	RBC	Current Account	55,231	nil
	Wood Gundy	Current Account	139,828	nil
	CIBC - SPP Holding	Current Account	387,155	5.40%
	TOTAL CASH - CURRENT ACCOUNT		11,564,311	

INVESTMENT	Date Invested	Location	Type	Amount	Face Value Interest Rate	Yield Rate	Date of Maturity	2024 Total Interest Earned/ Accrued
		CIBC Renaissance	High Interest Savings Account	7,793,508	4.55%	4.55%	not applicable	397,304
		CIBC High Interest	High Interest Savings Account	4,941,188	4.55%	4.55%	not applicable	251,291
		One Investment Savings	High Interest Savings Account	4,713,575	5.465%	5.465%	not applicable	300,338
	October 23, 2019	Cdn Western Bank	Bond	2,010,000	2.800%	2.78%	September 6, 2024	33,073
	January 16, 2020	Cdn Western Bank	Bond	3,000,000	2.597%	2.45%	September 6, 2024	50,061
	September 15, 20	Cdn Western Bank	Bond	1,500,000	2.597%	1.21%	September 6, 2024	12,570
	September 23, 20	Province of Ontario	Bond	2,300,000	1.230%	1.23%	December 2, 2026	27,156
	September 23, 20	ManuLife Financial	Bond	2,000,000	2.237%	1.34%	May 12, 2030, call date 2025	37,326
	December 14, 20	CIBC	Bond	4,100,000	3.300%	4.36%	May 26, 2025	96,320
	December 14, 20	Bank of Montreal	Bond	4,096,000	2.700%	4.59%	September 11, 2024	27,230
	June 28, 2023	CIBC	Non-Redeemable GIC	4,000,000	5.250%	5.25%	June 28, 2024	102,986
	December 7, 2023	National Bank	Non-Redeemable GIC	2,000,000	4.700%	4.70%	December 7, 2026	94,000
	December 21, 202	CIBC Trust Corp	Non-Redeemable GIC	2,000,000	4.450%	4.45%	December 22, 2025	89,000
	March 6, 2024	Laurenian Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	5.20%	5.20%	March 6, 2025	51,572
	March 6, 2024	National Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	5.00%	5.00%	March 6, 2025	50,000
	March 6, 2024	HSBC Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	4.80%	4.80%	March 6, 2026	96,000
	March 6, 2024	National Bank of Canada	GTD Investment Certificate	1,000,000	4.70%	4.70%	March 6, 2026	94,000
TOTAL INVESTMENTS				48,454,271				\$1,810,227

TOTAL CASH AND INVESTMENTS **\$60,018,582**

* Reserve Balance at December 31st, 2023 52,678,473

Investment By Institution

	<u>% of Total Portfolio</u>
C.I.B.C.	47%
Bank of Montreal	9%
Cdn Western Bank	13%
ManuLife Financial Bank	4%
One Investment Program	10%
Province of Ontario	5%
Laurenian Bank of Canada	2%
National Bank of Canada	8%
HSBC Bank of Canada	2%
	<u>100%</u>

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

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-41

Date: April 26, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Financial Summary for the Period Ending March 31, 2024

Recommendation:

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending March 31, 2024 be approved.

Summary:

The Financial Statements include the 2024 *actual* year-to-date income and expenditures. The budget approved at the February 23, 2024 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:

Forecast adjustments for the period ending March 31, 2024 include the following:

- A. Federal Funding increased by \$83,000
 - Shades Mills Conservation Area received federal funding through the enabling accessibility fund grant. Funds will be used to improve accessibility at the conservation area and are included in the 2024 Conservation Area capital budget.
- B. Self-Generated Revenue increased by \$35,000
 - Conservation Lands Management timber revenue increased by \$35,000.
- C. Net increase to Reserves of \$118,000
 - Transfer to the Forestry reserve increased by \$35,000 related to revenue from timber sales.
 - Transfer from the Conservation Area reserve decreased by \$83,000 due to federal grant received.

The Financial Statements for the period ending March 31, 2024 are attached.

Financial Implications:

The activity summarized will result in a NIL net result as at December 31, 2024.

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:

Kayleigh Keighan
Financial Controller

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

**GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FINANCIAL SUMMARY - FORECAST**

General Membership - April 26, 2024

FORECAST - FEBRUARY 29, 2024 - NET RESULT				\$0
<u>CHANGES - March 2024</u>				
P&S #5	Conservation Lands Management	\$35,000	Timber Revenue increase	\$0
		(\$35,000)	Transfer to Forestry Reserve increase	
P&S #14	Conservation Areas	\$83,000	Federal Grant increase - enabling accessibility funding	\$0
		(\$83,000)	Transfer from Conservation Area Reserve Decrease	
FORECAST - MARCH 31, 2024 - NET RESULT				\$0

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
for the period Ending March 31, 2024

Category			Budget 2023	Budget 2024	YTD Actual	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
<u>REVENUE</u>								
<u>Municipal</u>								
Municipal Apportionment	Category 1	various	11,976,000	12,275,000	4,091,666	12,275,000	12,275,000	-
Memorandums of Understanding Apportionment	Category 2	various	992,000	1,017,000	339,000	1,017,000	1,017,000	-
Other	Category 2 & 3	8	850,000	940,000	807,170	940,000	940,000	-
Total Municipal			13,818,000	14,232,000	5,237,836	14,232,000	14,232,000	-
<u>Government Grants</u>								
MNRF Transfer Payments	Category 1	various	449,688	449,688	-	449,688	449,688	-
Source Protection Program-Provincial	Category 1	various	640,000	834,000	331,152	834,000	834,000	-
Other Provincial	Category 1	various	737,500	737,500	598,222	737,500	737,500	-
Other Provincial	Category 2	8	-	130,000	307,786	130,000	130,000	-
Other Provincial	Category 3	10	30,000	100,000	31,041	100,000	100,000	-
Federal	Category 1,2,3	various	40,000	155,000	296,298	155,000	238,000	(83,000)
Total Government Grants			1,897,188	2,406,188	1,564,499	2,406,188	2,489,188	(83,000)
<u>Self Generated</u>								
User Fees and Sales								
<i>Resource Planning</i>	Category 1	4	1,144,000	994,000	292,804	994,000	994,000	-
<i>Burford Operations & Planting Services</i>	Category 3	9	580,000	680,000	578,262	680,000	680,000	-
<i>Conservation Lands Income</i>	Category 3	14	71,000	71,000	2,616	71,000	71,000	-
<i>Conservation Lands Income</i>	Category 1	5	15,000	15,000	49,200	15,000	50,000	(35,000)
<i>Conservation Areas User Fees</i>	Category 3	14	10,000,000	10,700,000	1,006,010	10,700,000	10,700,000	-
<i>Environmental Education</i>	Category 3	11	500,000	600,000	231,174	600,000	600,000	-
Property Rentals	Category 3	12	2,981,000	3,038,000	1,128,292	3,038,000	3,038,000	-
Hydro Generation	Category 3	13	580,000	580,000	82,538	580,000	580,000	-
Grand River Conservation Foundation	Category 1,2,3	various	27,000	662,000	-	662,000	662,000	-
Donations	Category 1,2,3	various	-	-	63,754	-	-	-
Investment Income	General Operating	7	1,350,000	2,200,000	441,566	2,200,000	2,200,000	-
Miscellaneous Income	various	various	-	-	8,148	-	-	-
Total Self-Generated Revenue			17,248,000	19,540,000	3,888,090	19,540,000	19,575,000	(35,000)
TOTAL REVENUE			32,963,188	36,178,188	10,690,425	36,178,188	36,296,188	(118,000)

GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
for the period Ending March 31, 2024

Category			Budget 2023	Budget 2024	YTD Actual	Previous Forecast	Current Forecast	Forecast Change
EXPENSES								
OPERATING Expenses								
Watershed Management	Category 1	1	1,276,000	1,146,100	222,360	1,146,100	1,146,100	-
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Category 1	2	895,000	911,000	152,139	911,000	911,000	-
Water Control Structures	Category 1	3	2,143,200	2,128,700	316,126	2,128,700	2,128,700	-
Resource Planning	Category 1	4	2,551,800	2,679,600	554,312	2,679,600	2,679,600	-
Conservation Lands Management	Category 1	5	2,954,600	2,871,900	432,938	2,871,900	2,871,900	-
Source Protection Program	Category 1	6	640,000	834,000	331,152	834,000	834,000	-
General Operating Expenses	General Operating	7	3,495,788	4,267,714	792,558	4,267,714	4,267,714	-
Watershed Services	Category 2	8	1,043,000	1,068,000	171,425	1,068,000	1,068,000	-
Burford Operations & Planting Services	Category 3	9	867,300	992,900	115,566	992,900	992,900	-
Conservation Services	Category 3	10	81,200	82,200	2,326	82,200	82,200	-
Environmental Education	Category 3	11	775,100	912,000	185,461	912,000	912,000	-
Property Rentals	Category 3	12	1,095,200	1,109,200	127,519	1,109,200	1,109,200	-
Hydro Production	Category 3	13	95,500	95,500	33,403	95,500	95,500	-
Conservation Areas	Category 3	14	9,037,000	9,782,000	738,954	9,782,000	9,782,000	-
Administrative Support	Category 3	15	1,198,000	1,217,400	81,622	1,217,400	1,217,400	-
Total Operating Expenses			28,148,688	30,098,214	4,257,861	30,098,214	30,098,214	-
MAJOR MAINTENANCE & EQUIPMENT Expenses								
Watershed Management	Category 1	1	110,000	110,000	15,261	110,000	110,000	-
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Category 1	2	190,000	190,000	4,391	190,000	190,000	-
Water Control Structures	Category 1	3	1,500,000	1,500,000	564,640	1,500,000	1,500,000	-
Conservation Areas	Category 3	14	2,000,000	2,000,000	203,004	2,000,000	2,000,000	-
Information Systems	General Operating	16	290,000	459,000	591,902	459,000	459,000	-
Motor Pool	General Operating	16	14,000	415,000	440,021	415,000	415,000	-
Total Major Maintenance & Equipment Expenses			4,104,000	4,674,000	1,819,219	4,674,000	4,674,000	-
SPECIAL PROJECTS Expenses								
Watershed Management	Category 1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Flood Forecasting and Warning	Category 1	2	-	250,000	-	250,000	250,000	-
Conservation Lands Management	Category 1	5	-	100,000	3,624	100,000	100,000	-
Watershed Services	Category 2	8	800,000	1,095,000	422,532	1,095,000	1,095,000	-
Conservation Services	Category 3	10	40,000	185,000	73,556	195,000	195,000	-
Environmental Education	Category 3	11	-	500,000	7,248	500,000	500,000	-
Total Special Project Expenses			840,000	2,130,000	506,960	2,140,000	2,140,000	-
Total Expenses			33,092,688	36,902,214	6,584,040	36,912,214	36,912,214	-
Gross Surplus/(Deficit)			(129,500)	(724,026)	4,106,385	(734,026)	(616,026)	118,000
Prior Year Surplus Carryforward			100,000	537,526	537,526	537,526	537,526	-
Net Funding FROM/(TO) Reserves			29,500	186,500	200,000	196,500	78,500	(118,000)
NET SURPLUS			-	-	4,843,911	-	-	-

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-34

Date: April 26, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Conestogo Lake Conservation Area Septic Upgrades

Recommendation:

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) award the tender for the Conestogo Lake Conservation Area Septic System Upgrades to Weber Environmental Services d/o 1159473 Ontario Limited for the amount of \$206,072.00 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total budget of \$230,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

Summary:

Not applicable.

Report:

The septic systems for Conestogo Lake Conservation Area's (CA) main washrooms in the Maples and Ash camping areas require replacement and upgrades to ensure continued operational capacity. Some additional system upgrades have been added to extend the life of the existing infrastructure, with others being replaced.

No significant changes to the washroom facilities themselves are proposed at this time, the work focuses on the restoration and upgrades to the septic systems.

The tender for the Conestogo Lake Septic Upgrades was publicly advertised on the Biddingo electronic procurement website on March 14, 2024 and closed on April 8, 2024. A total of twenty-four (24) potential bidders downloaded the tender package, with eight (8) attending the non-mandatory site meeting. Six (6) bids were received by the closing time.

The tender submissions were opened with an opening committee consisting of Sonja Radoja, Manager of Corporate Services, Brandon Heyer, Manager of Central Services, and Alan McKee, Project Supervisor. The tender submissions were opened in the virtual presence of everyone while sharing the screen through Microsoft Teams. The results of the tender process are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Tender Results

Rank	Company	Tender Amount (excluding HST)
1	Weber Environmental Services d/o 1159473 Ontario Limited	\$206,072.00
2	Ron Van Manen Trucking Inc	\$213,496.75
3	Pioneer Septic Solutions Inc.	\$230,620.00
4	Bomar Landscaping Inc.	\$265,579.00
5	Lyncon Construction Inc.	\$340,486.70
6	Roubos Farm Service Limited	\$367,101.00

Staff are satisfied with the lowest cost submission as it aligns with the project specifications, requirements, and budget. RJ Burnside & Associates also reviewed the bids for irregularities

and completeness and based on the submission they have recommended the project be awarded to Weber Environmental Services.

GRCA staff recommend that a budget be approved with an additional internal contingency added to allow staff to work with the consultant and the contractor to resolve unforeseen required project changes. The total proposed budget is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Budget

Tender amount	\$206,072.00
Internal GRCA Project Contingency	\$23,928.00
Total budget excluding HST	\$230,000.00

Financial Implications:

This work is included in the 2024 Conservation Areas capital budget.

Other Department Considerations:

Conservation Areas have been involved with design of the proposed work.

Prepared by:

Alan McKee
Project Supervisor, Central Services

Brandon Heyer
Manager of Central Services

Approved by:

Karen Armstrong
Deputy CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-33

Date: April 26, 2024

To: General Membership of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: ERO Posting 019-8462– Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument.

Recommendation:

THAT the Conservation Authorities Act Regulations Committee be authorized to approve staff comments on ERO Posting 019-8462– Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument on behalf of the GRCA General Membership.

Summary:

Not applicable.

Report:

On April 12, 2024, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) released a proposed Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) that incorporates feedback received through the previous consultation completed in spring 2023.

The GRCA provided comments during the initial consultation through report GM-05-23-43. A brief summary of the key points are highlighted below:

1. That the province, through their review of the natural heritage sections of the Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan continue to recognize the importance of natural heritage and water resource features (i.e. wetlands and watercourses) and systems.
2. That the province clarifies the roles of municipalities and conservation authorities in the identification and management of hazardous lands and hazardous sites.
3. That the document include a requirement for watershed/subwatershed planning to support settlement area boundary expansions, secondary planning and other large-scale planning projects (i.e. planning for potable water, stormwater, and wastewater systems).

The deadline for submission of comments on the proposed PPS is May 12. Due to the commenting timeline, staff will not be able to present and receive approval of the GRCA's comments from the General Membership. Therefore, it is requested that the Board delegate approval of the comments to the Ad-hoc Conservation Authorities Act Regulations Committee.

The May agenda will include a report and copy of the comments that were submitted to the province.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-39

Date: April 26, 2024

To: General Membership of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: ERO Posting 019-8320 – Regulation detailing new Minister’s Permit and Review powers under the Conservation Authorities Act

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-39 – Regulation detailing new Minister’s Permit and Review powers under the Conservation Authorities Act be approved and submitted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario.

Summary:

On February 16, 2024, the Province released decision notices to move ahead with the changes under the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CA Act) to support Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan. Previously unproclaimed sections of the CA Act came into force and effect, and GRCA’s development regulation (Regulation 150/06) was revoked and replaced with Ontario Regulation 41/24, a single regulation for all conservation authorities. These changes took effect on April 1, 2024, and impact activities and the extent of areas regulated by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), procedural matters, reporting requirements and enforcement.

Included in the recently proclaimed provisions in the *Conservation Authorities Act* are new powers for the Minister to (1) issue a permit and (2) review permit decision.

Under ERO Posting 019-8320, the Province is looking for feedback on a new regulation to set out the circumstances under which these powers could be used. Based on a review of the ERO posting, the following feedback is provided:

1. Should the Ministry step in to issue a permit within the Grand River watershed, it will be important that the Minister consider local circumstances and technical information related to the proposed development, assume full responsibility for enforcement and compliance related to the permit that is issued, as well as the liability with the issuance of the approval.
2. The GRCA has no comments related to the proposed additional requirements regarding permits issued by the Minister, or Ministerial review of CA permit decision.

Report:

On February 16, 2024, the Province released decision notices to move ahead with the changes under the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CA Act) to support Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan. Previously unproclaimed sections of the CA Act came into force and effect, and GRCA’s development regulation (Regulation 150/06) was revoked and replaced with Ontario Regulation 41/24, a single regulation for all conservation authorities. These changes took effect on April 1, 2024 and impact activities and the extent of areas regulated by the GRCA, procedural matters, reporting requirements and enforcement.

Included in the recently proclaimed provisions in the *Conservation Authorities Act* are new powers for the Minister to (1) issue an order to prevent a conservation authority from issuing a permit and to take over the permitting process in place of the conservation authority, and (2) review a conservation authority permit decision at the request of an applicant.

On April 5, 2024, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) posted a proposal on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO Posting 019-8320) titled “Regulation detailing new Minister’s Permit and Review powers under the Conservation Authorities Act”. The Province is looking for feedback on a new regulation to set out the circumstances under which the new powers could be used. The new regulation would also include additional requirements that would apply should a request to the Minister be made to review a decision on a permit made by the Conservation Authority.

1) Permits issued by the Minister

Existing requirements under the *CA Act* regarding permits issued by the Minister under section 28.1.1 include:

- The Minister may issue an order directing a CA not to issue a permit to a specific individual for a specified activity or to a person who may wish to engage in a certain type of activity that would be prohibited under section 28 without a permit.
- The Minister’s decision to issue an order is discretionary and can be issued before or after an application for a permit has been submitted to a CA.
- The Minister is required to provide notice to the CA and applicant prior to posting the order on the ERO.
- If an order is made, the Minister has the power to issue the permit. When making a permitting decision, the Minister is required to satisfy the same “tests” or decision criteria concerning natural hazards and public safety that are considered by the CA.
- The Minister can refuse a permit or add conditions to the permit.
- Permit decisions issued by the Minister are not appealable.

Proposed requirements that would be included in the new regulation:

- As noted above, the Minister has the power to make an order to prevent a Conservation Authority from making a permit decision and take over the permit process. It is proposed to limit this power to the following circumstances; when the development activity or type or class of permits pertains to or supports a specific provincial interest, including housing (community, affordable and market-based), community services (health care, long-term care, education, etc.), transportation infrastructure, buildings that facilitate economic development or employment, or mixed-use development.
- If an applicant wishes to petition the Minister to issue an order, there are a number of items that must be included in that petition including why the Minister’s involvement is required, indication that the local municipality has endorsed the project and support the Minister’s involvement, and status of any other project approvals.

2) Permits reviewed by the Minister

Existing requirements under the *CA Act* relating to requests for review under section 28.1.2 regarding permits where there is an order made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing under section 34.1 of 47 of the *Planning Act* and section 28.1 regarding all other conservation authority permits include:

- An applicant who has been refused a permit or conditions attached to a permit by a CA to which the applicant objects to, can within a certain timeline submit a request for the Minister to review the authority’s decision.
- After receiving the request, the Minister must decide if it will proceed with the review. If the Minister decides to conduct a review, notice of this intent must be posted on the ERO.
- After conducting the review, the Minister will make a decision (confirm/vary/reverse the decision and /or remove or include conditions).

- The Minister is required to base the decision on the same “tests” or decision criteria concerning natural hazards and public safety that are considered by the CA.
- Minister’s decision is not appealable.

Proposed additional requirements to be set out in the new regulation:

- The Ministry can only conduct a review of CA permit decisions in the following circumstances; if the development activity pertains to or supports specified provincial interests including housing (community, affordable and market-based), community services (health care, long-term care, education, etc.), transportation infrastructure, buildings that facilitate economic development or employment, or mixed-use development.
- Of note, the requirement above would not apply to permit reviews under section 28.1.2 regarding permits where there is an order made by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing under section 34.1 or 47 of the Planning Act.
- If an applicant wishes to request a review, there are a number of items that must be included in the request including rationale for the request, details of CA’s review/conditions, the reason for Minister’s involvement, demonstration of municipal support for the project and/or request and status of project approvals.

GRCA comments

When exercising Ministerial powers related to permits under the CA Act, it is required that the Minister must review the permit against the same criteria as the CA from a natural hazard and public safety perspective. It will be important that the Minister considers local circumstances and technical information related to the proposed development. For example, different floodplain standards are applied across the province, and a generic approach to reviewing development in the floodplain will not address the criteria identified in the posting. Development in the floodplain must be reviewed against the local standards and models in order to satisfy the criteria concerning natural hazards and public safety. It will therefore be essential in the implementation process for the CA to provide technical and local watershed context to the Minister when the review is being completed.

Should the Minister issue a permit, the Ministry should also assume full responsibility for enforcement, compliance, and liability with the approval issuance.

The GRCA has no comment on the proposed additional requirements regarding permits issued by the Minister, or Ministerial review of CA permit decision.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not applicable.

Prepared by:

Beth Brown
 Manager of Planning and Regulations Services

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
 Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-37

Date: April 26, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Fee Policy and Fee Schedule Amendments

Recommendation:

THAT amendments to the Grand River Conservation Authority Fee Policy as outlined in this report be approved and implemented effective April 26, 2024;

AND THAT amendment to Fee Schedule 2 – Conservation Area Programs and Services be approved and implemented effective April 26, 2024;

AND THAT amendments to Fee Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulations Fees be approved and implemented effective April 26, 2024.

Summary:

On February 16, 2024, the Province released decision notices to move ahead with legislative and regulatory changes under the Conservation Authorities Act (CA Act) to support Ontario's Housing Supply Action. On April 1st, 2024, previously unproclaimed sections of the CA Act came into effect and GRCA's development regulation (Regulation 150/06) was replaced with Ontario Regulation 41/24. Report GM-03-24-27 provides an overview of the changes and necessary updates to existing Conservation Authority documents, policies, and procedures about GRCA's planning and compliance program. Amongst other implementation actions, a review of the GRCA's Fee policy and the fee schedule for this program area has been completed and amendments proposed.

The fee schedule for Conservation Area Programs and Services has also been amended to include a new product for sale.

Report:

Planning and Regulations

On February 16, 2024, the Province released decision notices to move ahead with the changes under the Conservation Authorities Act (CA Act) to support Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan. Previously unproclaimed sections of the CA Act will come into force and effect and GRCA's development regulation (Regulation 150/06) will be revoked and replaced with Ontario Regulation 41/24. These changes took effect on April 1, 2024, and necessitated updates to existing Conservation Authority documents, policies, and procedures, including the GRCA's Fee Policy.

Report GM-03-24-27 provides an overview of the changes, status of implementation, and the next steps. Staff have now completed a review of the current Fee Policy that was approved by the General Membership on December 15, 2023. Key amendments required to implement legislative and regulatory changes were identified as follows:

1) Fee Policy

Section 21.2 of the CA Act includes additional subsections related to reconsideration of fees for permit applications. An applicant may appeal directly to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) if the GRCA does not make a decision within 30 days of receiving a request for fee reconsideration, or if the applicant disagrees with the decision made by the Chief Administrative Officer (or delegate) and pays under protest.

While a hearing before the GRCA Board of Directors is not required through legislation, as outlined in Report GM-03-24-27, the opportunity to appeal/request a hearing is offered as an option rather than appealing directly to the OLT.

These changes necessitate an update of the refund/fee reconsideration section of the Fee Policy.

2) Fee Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulation Services

A Minister’s Direction was issued on December 28, 2023 which extended the freeze on plan review and permitting fees and prohibits any changes in how these fees are determined until December 31, 2024. Accordingly, no changes to the fees themselves are proposed at this time, however amendments to the fee schedule are required.

Currently, an applicant may request renewal/extension of an expired permit if there are no changes to the plan and the request is received within 1 year of the expiry date. Section 11 (2) of Ontario Regulation 41/24 now requires the holder of a permit to submit an application for an extension of a permit 60 days prior to the expiry date, necessitating a change in process.

With respect to review of aggregate applications, currently the plan review fee is based on whether or not there is a natural heritage or hazard feature within 120 metres of the licensed area. This reflected GRCA’s interest around wetlands, and agreements with municipalities to undertake natural heritage review, for example, for applications within adjacent lands (120 metres) to Provincially Significant Wetlands. Given legislative changes resulting in a reduction of area of interest around wetlands to 30 metres, and previously introduced legislation prohibiting the GRCA from entering into agreements with municipalities to provide non-mandatory, natural heritage plan review services, the fee schedule requires revision.

The current Fee Policy has been updated to reflect these changes and is included as Appendix A. The revised Fee Schedule for Planning and Regulations is included as Appendix C. A summary of the changes is as follows:

Section	Explanation of Change
<p>Fee Policy Section 3 – Planning and Regulations, Refunds/Fee Reconsideration</p>	<p>Deleted reasons an applicant/third party can request an administrative review of a fee as the legislation does not place any conditions on the ability to request a fee reconsideration.</p> <p>Added wording to offer the opportunity to appeal/request a hearing before the Board of Directors (General Membership).</p> <p>Added wording to reflect new ability to appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal.</p>
<p>Fee Schedule Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulations Programs and Services</p>	<p>Revised when aggregate plan review fee is applicable, from within 120 metres to a feature of interest to 30 metres.</p> <p>Added preamble in notes section about new Regulation.</p> <p>Remove references to natural heritage.</p> <p>Deleted expired permit process. Replaced with permit extension process to reflect new legislative timeline to request a permit extension 60 days prior to expiry date.</p> <p>Replaced reference to Ontario Regulation 150/06 to 41/24.</p>

Conservation Areas

The fee schedule for Conservation Area Programs and Services has also been amended to include a new product for sale. The product is small waterproof bags that will primarily be sold at tubing and boat rental locations. The updated fee schedule has been included in Appendix B.

Financial Implications:

There are no additional costs incurred because of these changes.

Other Department Considerations:

As per [O.Reg.400/22 Information Requirements](#), once approved, the updated Fee Policy and updated fee schedules will be posted on the GRCA's website on the [Governance page](#).

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Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority Fee Policy



Approval Date: ~~April 26, 2023~~ ~~December 15, 2023~~, 2024~~3~~

Effective Date: ~~April 26, 2023~~ ~~December 15, 2023~~, 2024~~3~~

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Legislative Framework and Background

This Fee Policy has been prepared to satisfy the requirement for conservation authorities to have a policy for the fees charged for Authority programs and services, as described in Section 21.2 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

Since 1996, the Conservation Authorities Act empowered conservation authorities to charge fees for services approved by the Minister of Natural Resources. Section 21 (m.1) of the Conservation Authorities Act allowed for this collection of fees for the following services, where the service was not supported through provincial grant funding.

On January 1, 2023, the Conservation Authorities Act was amended by repealing 21 (1) (m.1) and enacting section 21.2 (1)-(12) "Fees for Programs and Services". Subsection (1) enables the Minister to determine the classes of programs and services in respect of which an authority may charge a fee and (2) requires the Minister to publish a list in a policy document. This list has been published through the 'Policy: Minister's list of classes of programs and services in respect of which conservation authorities (CAs) may charge a fee' on April 11, 2022, and replaces the 1997 'Policies and Procedures for the Charging of Conservation Authority Fees' which was approved by the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. Conservation authorities may only charge a fee for a program or service that it provides if it is included in this list. The Minister's list identifies that CAs may charge a fee for mandatory, municipal, and other programs and services where the user-pay principle is appropriate.

Guiding Principles

When updating existing fee schedules or establishing new fees, the following guiding principles will be considered:

- Fees will be established as per legislative requirements, the ability to operate and sustain programs and services, and reflect a user-pay principle;
- Fee increases will consider inflationary factors;
- Direct, indirect, and capital costs associated with the program or service may be included in the calculation of the overall cost;
- Fee schedules will be reviewed on an annual basis to inform the budget for the following year.

Programs and Services - Implementation

1. Outdoor Environmental Education

GRCA outdoor environmental education programs are funded by various sources including agreements with school boards, fees charged directly to school classes or other groups participating, and donations to the GRCF. GRCA reserves or surplus funds from other GRCA programs and services may also be a source of funding as directed by the GRCA's Board of Directors. The GRCA currently offers programs on-site at nature centres or conservation areas, off-site at schools or other locations determined by school boards or groups with which the GRCA has an agreement, or virtually.

This program includes fees for:

- School Programs delivered through agreements with school boards, individual schools, or other private school operators.
- Non-School Programs – community, group, or other outdoor education programs.

Fees - See Schedule 1

Factors in Determining Fees

- Cost to deliver the program
- Demand for the program (number of classes being delivered)
- User's ability to pay

Refunds/Fee Reconsideration

- Refunds are considered on a case-by-case basis should the GRCA be unable to deliver the service.

Discounts/Subsidies/Donations/Exemptions

- Agreements with school boards include the ability to add additional classes at a negotiated rate. Fees may be subsidized with donations from the GRCF based on the availability of funding and then assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Review Process

- Fees are reviewed and negotiated annually with school boards. Contracts cover the school year (September – August) and are negotiated in time for the subsequent school year.

Public Notification and Consultation Process

- Not applicable given that fees are established by negotiated individual contracts.

2. Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas provide various active recreational programs and services that are offered to the general public. These programs and services are pay-for-use and include:

- General Admission Fees – day use, membership, boat launch
- Activity/Equipment Fees – tubing, boating, cross-country skiing
- Camping Fees - seasonal camping, overnight camping, and additional vehicle fees
- Hunting Fees
- Facility Rental Fees
- Event/Access Fees

Fees – See Schedule 2

Factors in Determining Fees

Criteria for setting fees are:

- Fee comparisons to similar operations, including trends analysis;
- Anticipated operational expenses that will be incurred that will impact the budget;
- Trends in demand for specific programs and services
- Projected capital expenses

Refunds/Fee Reconsideration

- Refunds are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Discounts/Subsidies/Donations/Exemptions

- Decisions related to offering discounts or donations for programs and services within Conservation Areas are aligned with the strategic priorities of the GRCA. This includes approving requests for discounts or donations from Community Partners and Community Groups, the GRCA, or community events that align with the strategic priorities
- Requests for donations or discounts must be accompanied by a Letter of Intent, outlining the scope of the event or initiative. Thirty days' notice is required to process requests. Requests that are approved will be awarded with a confirmation letter, outlining the terms of use for the discount or donation, and approval from the Manager of Conservation Area Operations
- Per the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation O.Reg.429/07 and the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Conservation Areas permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties, free of charge.

Review Process

- Conservation Area fees are reviewed annually by Conservation Area staff each fall, in preparation for the following year.

Public Notification and Consultation Process

- Following Board approval of fees, the new fees are updated on the GRCA's website. Seasonal campers receive an electronic copy of the fee schedule and policies annually.

Other - Indigenous patrons at GRCA Conservation Areas

- Indigenous patrons who enter the Conservation Areas for the purpose of ceremony, the collection of vegetation for medicinal use, or to harvest animals within their treaty rights are not required to pay a fee to enter the conservation area or miscellaneous hunting area. Upon entry, Indigenous patrons entering for these reasons are asked to advise staff about the purpose of their visit. For entry related to hunting, access is limited to GRCA-authorized miscellaneous hunting properties, and a permit is required which can be obtained by contacting the GRCA Administration Centre.

3. Planning and Regulations

This program includes fees for:

- Permit Fees
- Inquiry Fees

Plan Review Fees

Fees – See Schedule 3

Factors in Determining Fees

The GRCA administers its fee program for Planning and Regulations to achieve a partial cost recovery for permit and planning.

When reviewing the fee schedule, the following factors and data are considered:

- Analysis of trends in workload changes as a result of shifts in the development market and types of applications;
- Consultation with developers/municipalities about work effort, new planning/legislative requirements and streamlining;
- Complexity of applications and technical review required by staff;
- Review of fees for similar applications within watershed municipalities and adjacent Conservation Authorities;
- General overview of status of cost recovery; Statistics related to number of applications and annual changes, where required;
- Level of service/review expectation for processing timing;
- Areas of improvement of level of service/staffing demands;
- Efficiency measures as required;
- Reserve fund requirements;
- Identification of specific/specialized municipal requirements;
- Trends in legal costs associated with compliance and appeals to the Ontario Lands Tribunal and other legal services.

Refunds/Fee Reconsideration

Application for an administrative review of a fee may be requested by a third party, either an individual, an organization, or an appointed representative, ~~for the following reasons:~~

- ~~• If a fee is contrary to the fees set out in the fee schedule, or~~
- ~~• The fee set out in the fee schedule is excessive in relation to the service or program received~~

Requests for an administrative review must be in writing to the Chief Administrative Officer (or delegate) and specify the reason(s) for the request for review.

Upon reconsideration of a fee that was charged by the GRCA, the GRCA may:

- Order the person to pay the fee in the amount originally charged;
- Vary the amount of the fee originally charged, as the GRCA considers appropriate; or
- Order that no fee be charged for the program or service.

~~If the third party is ordered to pay a fee and is not satisfied with this outcome, an appeal may be requested to be directed to the GRCA Board of Directors for a decision. Once heard, the appeal will be dismissed or upheld through a resolution passed by the Board of Directors. The appellant will be notified accordingly of the Board's decision the third party may:~~

- ~~• Option 1 - Within 30 days of receipt of the reconsideration decision, an appeal may be requested to be directed to the GRCA Board of Directors. Once heard, the appeal will be dismissed or upheld through a resolution passed by the Board of Directors. The appellant will be notified of the Board's decision. If the party is not satisfied with the outcome, the party has the right to proceed with Option 2.~~
- ~~• Option 2- Pay the fee, indicating to the GRCA in writing that the fee is being paid under protest and within 30 days after payment of the fee, appeal the amount charged by the GRCA upon reconsideration to the Ontario Land Tribunal.~~

If the GRCA fails to make a decision on the fee reconsideration request within 30 days of receipt, the third party may:

- Option 1 – A hearing may be requested to be directed to the GRCA Board of Directors for a decision. The Board of Directors may:
 - Order the person to pay the fee in the amount originally charged;
 - Vary the amount of the fee originally charged, as the GRCA considers appropriate;

or

 - Order that no fee be charged for the program or service.

The appellant will be notified accordingly of the Board's decision. If the party is not satisfied with the outcome, the party has the right to proceed with Option 2.
- Option 2 - Appeal the amount of the fee directly to the Ontario Lands Tribunal.

Discounts/Subsidies/Donations/Exemptions

Exemptions for permit applications, Planning Act applications, inquiries, and site assessment fees will be considered for:

Non-profit conservation groups contributing to the protection and restoration of the natural environment, examples include but are not limited to: Ducks Unlimited, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

Review Process

- Permit and Planning fees are reviewed annually each fall, in preparation for the following year.

Public Notification and Consultation Process

- Proposed fees are reviewed with the GRCA-Homebuilder Liaison Committee in advance of approval by the Board. Following Board approval of fees, the new fees are updated on the GRCA's website.

4. Tree Nursery

The GRCA's nursery and tree planting programs are funded by fees charged for planting material (trees) and planting services, surplus funds from other GRCA programs and services, and periodically, donations are also received through the Grand River Conservation Foundation (GRCF).

Fees - See Schedule 4

Factors in Determining Fees

When reviewing the fee schedule, the following factors and data are considered:

- Analysis of operating costs (including seed processing, fertilization, soil care, irrigation, weed control, the length of time it takes to grow various tree species to saleable size, lifting trees, packaging trees, transporting trees from our Nursery in Burford, sourcing trees from external commercial nurseries, transporting trees, storing trees in our cooler until they are distributed, and the distribution of all of these trees to tree planting contractors)
- Completing market comparators, including charges from other Conservations Authorities and retail nurseries
- Inflation
- Respond to infrequent/isolated requests related to tree sales (deliveries, plan reviews for external agencies, storage fees, and tree maintenance).
- From year to year, not all tree species are available. Tree planting costs are determined through an annual contractor Request For Proposal (RFP) process that occurs over the winter in preparation for the spring tree planting season.

Refunds/Fee Reconsideration:

- A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 must accompany each order, which goes towards the final invoice.
- All requests are received through the Supervisor of Forestry Operations who will review the request and follow up as required.
- If the nursery cannot fulfill the order, or a customer requests a cancellation for their order one month before order fulfillment, a refund will be issued.

Discounts/Subsidies/Donations/Exemptions (including in-kind services)

- From time to time, tree stock has been overestimated which can result in excess stock. In this event, trees will be offered to watershed municipalities for their planting requirements.
- On the second Friday in May every year, the GRCA holds an end-of-season tree sale. All watershed residents are welcome to purchase trees at this tree sale on a first-come first-served basis. Trees sold at the sale are left over from the planting season, due to cancelled orders or stock overruns and are typically sold at a discount.
- The GRCA may donate trees as authorized by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Review Process

- Fees are reviewed annually in the late summer or early fall by Forestry Operations staff.

Public Notification and Consultation Process

- Following approval of fees, the new fees are updated on the GRCA's website and the online purchasing system.

5. Conservation Lands

This program includes fees for the following:

- Lease Agreements including commercial, agricultural, and residential leases
- Licence Agreements: to permit a third party to undertake an activity or program on GRCA property
- Encroachment Agreements: to permit an existing encroachment on GRCA property
- Easement agreements

Fees – not applicable; as negotiated

Factors in Determining Fees

- Applicable legislation and existing legal agreements.
- Negotiation with the third party(ies).
- Market evaluation
- Legal considerations.

Refunds/Fee Reconsideration

- Refunds are considered on a case-by-case basis and will be issued as outlined in the negotiated agreement with the party(ies).

Discounts/Subsidies/Donations/Exemptions

- Not applicable

Review Process

- Fees associated with a lease, licence, encroachment, and easement agreements are reviewed at the end of the term and re-negotiated by Property staff.

Public Notification and Consultation Process

- Not applicable given that fees are established by negotiated individual contracts.

Policy Review Process and Frequency

This Fee Policy and Schedules will be reviewed at least once per year by the GRCA Management Team. The Management Team will seek information regarding fees, from various sources, as identified in the implementation section above; and prepare a proposed revised Fee Schedule with a report to the Board of Directors regarding recommended changes, if applicable. The Fee Policy and Schedules are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

Once approved, the revised Fee Schedules to this policy will be published on the GRCA's website, and in other materials used by the public.

Public Notification

The public will be notified of any proposed changes to the Fee Policy or Fee Schedules, by way of posting a notice on the GRCA website's 'Governance' page that the Fee Schedule will be reviewed on an identified date, at an open meeting of the Authority's Board of Directors. Fees will be reviewed at least once per year and will be brought to the Board of Directors for review and approval if changes are proposed.

Date of Effect and Transition

This updated Fee Policy becomes effective as of ~~April 26, December 15, 2024~~³.

The update to this Fee Policy supersedes and replaces all previous fee policies and/or schedules.

References

This policy was developed using the following references:

- Conservation Authorities Act
- Policies and Procedures for the Charging of Conservation Authority Fees, established by the Ministry of Natural Resources (June 1997, updated March 1999)
- Conservation Ontario - Guideline for CA Fee Administration Policies for Plan Review and Permitting - June 24, 2019
- Conservation Ontario – Guidance on CA Fee Policies and Fee Schedules – September 13, 2022
- Policy: Minister's list of classes of programs and services in respect of which conservation authorities may charge a fee – April 11, 2022
- Fee Schedules

TITLE	GRCA Fee Policy: Fee Schedule 2 – Conservation Area Programs and Services
DEPARTMENT	Conservation Areas
APPROVED DATE	January-April 26, 2024
EFFECTIVE DATE	January-April 26, 2024

Table 1: Proposed 2024 Day Use Admission Fees

Day Use Type	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
All Conservation Areas – Adult	\$7.50	\$8.50
All Conservation Areas - Senior/Persons with disability	\$6.10	\$6.75
All Conservation Areas – Child 4-12	\$3.28	\$3.75
Elora Quarry – Parking	\$14.07	\$15.00
Elora Quarry – Adult	\$9.85	\$11.00
Elora Quarry – Senior/Persons with disability	\$7.04	\$8.00
Elora Quarry – Child	\$5.16	\$5.75
Pool (per person)	\$2.35	\$2.75
Auto Gate Admission	\$15.01	\$17.00
ePass (Day use: Belwood, Conestogo lower park, Guelph Lake, Rockwood, Pinehurst, Luther Marsh)	\$15.01	\$17.00
ePass (Luther Marsh daily hunt)	\$15.01	\$17.00

Table 2: Proposed 2024 Membership Fees

Membership Type	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Family membership	\$141.59	\$160.00
Senior/disability	\$115.04	\$130.00
Membership replacement	\$30.97	\$35.00
Bulk membership discount (5+)	\$106.19	\$120.00

Table 3: Proposed 2024 Hunting Fees

Belwood Lake	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Seasonal Hunting Permit (migratory bird/deer/small game/fall turkey)	\$273.45	\$309.00
Deer/Fall turkey	\$182.30	\$206.00
Deer Archery only	\$145.84	\$165.00
Conestogo Lake	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Seasonal hunting permit (migratory bird/deer/small game/fall turkey)	\$319.02	\$360.00
Deer / Fall turkey	\$227.88	\$258.00
Deer archery only	\$145.84	\$165.00
Migratory birds/small Game	\$154.95	\$175.00
Luther Marsh	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Day Hunting Permit	\$15.01	\$17.00
Seasonal Hunting Permit (Sept. - Feb.) All Game	\$319.03	\$360.00
Seasonal Deer and Fall Turkey Only Permit (Oct. - Dec.)	\$182.30	\$206.00
Seasonal Small Game/Migratory Birds Permit	\$154.96	\$175.00
Deer archery only	\$145.84	\$165.00
Opening Day of Migratory Birds Permit	\$22.79	\$25.00
Miscellaneous Hunting Areas	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Seasonal Hunting Permit	\$109.38	\$124.00

Table 4: Proposed 2024 Nightly Camping Rates

Brant Park	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Premium Unserviced (Waterfront)	\$48.31	\$54.50
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Serviced (sewer)	\$58.34	\$66.00
Byng Island	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Premium Unserviced (Waterfront)	\$48.31	\$54.50
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Conestogo Lake	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Elora Gorge	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Serviced (Electricity)	\$46.89	\$53.00
Serviced (Electricity/Sewer/Water)	\$58.34	\$66.00
Guelph Lake	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Field Festival Sites – Unserviced	\$169.91	\$198.00
Laurel Creek	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Premium Unserviced (Waterfront)	\$48.31	\$54.50
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Pinehurst	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Standard Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Premium Serviced	\$53.10	\$62.00
Rockwood	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$43.75	\$49.50
Serviced	\$51.96	\$59.00
Standard (Sewer) Serviced	\$58.34	\$66.00

Table 5: Proposed 2024 Seasonal Camping Rates

Conservation Area	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Additional vehicle	\$101.77	\$115.00
Seasonal deposit – returning seasonal camper	\$221.24	\$250.00
Seasonal deposit – new seasonal camper	\$884.96	\$1,000.00

Conservation Area	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Brant	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$1,998.84	\$2,259.00
Premium unserviced (waterfront)	\$2,457.68	\$2,777.00
Serviced (water only)	\$2,141.24	\$2,420.00
Standard serviced	\$2,710.83	\$3,063.00
Premium serviced (EWS)	\$3,214.67	\$3,633.00
Byng	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Premium serviced-water only (waterfront)	\$2,496.26	\$2,820.00
Premium serviced (waterfront)	\$3,247.34	\$3,670.00
Unserviced	\$1,998.84	\$2,259.00
Serviced	\$2,853.23	\$3,224.00
Serviced (water only)	\$2,141.24	\$2,420.00
Conestogo	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$1,998.84	\$2,259.00
Serviced	\$2,459.58	\$2,779.00
Elora	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Serviced (sewer)	\$3,214.67	\$3,633.00
Serviced	\$2,710.83	\$3,063.00
Guelph	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Serviced	\$2,710.82	\$3,063.00
Premium unserviced (waterfront)	\$2,457.68	\$2,777.00
Laurel Creek	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Serviced	\$2,710.82	\$3,063.00
Pinehurst	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Unserviced	\$1,998.84	\$2,259.00
Serviced	\$2,710.83	\$3,063.00

*Monthly Camping removed at all Conservation Areas

Table 6: Proposed 2024 Group Camping Rates

Guelph, Conestogo, Brant, Byng, Pinehurst, Elora, Rockwood	2024 After tax (rounded, as needed)
Unserviced	\$80 site fee per day AND day-use fee per person AND vehicle fee per day
Serviced	\$125 - \$250 site fee per day: based on # of serviced pedestals AND day-use fee per person AND vehicle fee per day
Unserviced; waterfront	\$125 - \$250 based on size of site AND day-use fee per person AND vehicle fee per day
Youth groups	\$80.00 site fee per day AND day-use fee per person AND vehicle fee per day

Table 7: Proposed 2024 Additional Camping Fees

Item	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Cancellation fee	\$15.00
Reservation fee	\$13.00
Extra vehicle	\$17.00
Modification fee	\$8.00

Table 8: Proposed 2024 Activity Fees

Activity	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Mini Golf - Adult (Rockwood)	\$5.31	\$6.00
Mini Golf - Child (Rockwood)	\$3.54	\$4.00
Movie night (Shade's Mills)	\$15.01	\$17.00
Winter Equipment Rentals (Shade's Mills/Laurel Creek/Pinehurst)	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Ski boots (adult)	\$7.75	\$8.75
Ski boots (child)	\$5.92	\$6.75
Ski poles (adult)	\$5.92	\$6.75
Ski poles (child)	\$5.92	\$6.75
Skis (adult)	\$11.39	\$12.75
Skis (child)	\$5.92	\$6.75
Full ski set (skis, poles, boots) (adult)	\$21.88	\$24.75
Full ski set (skis, poles, boots) (child)	\$16.41	\$18.50
Snowshoes (adult & child))	\$14.58	\$16.50

Table 9: Proposed 2024 Boating & Tubing Rentals

Belwood	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Boat launch	\$11.85	\$13.50
Launch season Pass	\$95.71	\$110.00
Snowmobile/ATV ice fishing lanch (New)	\$2.65	\$3.00
Byng	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Canoe/kayak - 1 hour	\$18.23	\$20.50
Canoe/kayak - 4 hour	\$45.58	\$51.50
Canoe/kayak - 8 hour	\$72.92	\$82.50
Conestogo	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Daily boat launch	\$11.85	\$13.50
Launch season pass	\$95.71	\$110.00
Elora Gorge	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Tubing registration	\$18.58	\$20.00
Complete tubing package	\$47.85	\$54.00
Laurel Creek	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Canoe (4 hour rental)	\$45.58	\$51.50
Canoe (8 hour rental)	\$72.92	\$82.50
Pinehurst	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Canoe/double kayak/peddle boat (1 hour rental)	\$18.23	\$20.50
Canoe/double kayak/peddle boat (4 hour rental)	\$45.58	\$51.50
Rockwood	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Canoe (1 hour rental)	\$22.12	\$25.00

Table 10: Proposed 2024 Facility Rentals

Brant	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Grand Pavilion	\$113.94	\$128.75
Parkview Pavilion	\$91.15	\$103.00
Picnic areas	\$36.46	\$41.25
Byng	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Pavilion	\$159.51	\$180.00
Conestogo	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Pavilion	\$63.81	\$72.00
Elora Gorge	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Kay Marston Pavilion A or B	\$221.24	\$250
Kay Marston Pavilion Full	\$442.48	\$500
Guelph Lake	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Island Pavilion	\$214.20	\$242.00
Laurel Creek	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Critter shelter	\$159.51	\$180.00
Lakeview Shelter	\$109.38	\$123.50
Baseball shelter	\$91.15	\$103.00
Pinehurst Lake	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Sutor Shelter	\$109.38	\$123.50
White Oaks Shelter	\$72.92	\$82.50
Sunset Shelter	\$45.58	\$51.50
Shade's Mills	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax
Chalet Shelter	\$227.88	\$257.50
Beach/Diamond/Trail Shelter	\$109.38	\$123.50

Table 11: Proposed 2024 Vending Item Fees

Item	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Ice - Brant and Pinehurst	\$3.19	\$3.75
Ice - all other CA's	\$3.42	\$4.00
Worms	\$4.56	\$5.25
Fire starter	\$1.37	\$1.50
Firewood - regular	\$8.20	\$10.00
<u>Waterproof bags</u>	<u>\$22.12</u>	<u>\$ 25.00</u>

Table 12: Proposed 2024 Miscellaneous Fees

Item	2024 Before Tax	2024 After Tax (rounded, as needed)
Dumping station fee	\$22.12	\$25.00
Trailer storage - per month (Elora + Laurel + Guelph + Byng)	\$68.36	\$77.25
Trailer storage - 6 months (Elora + Guelph + Laurel + Byng)	\$273.45	\$309.00
Access Agreement – administrative fee	\$66.37	\$75.00
Access Agreement – municipal partner training exercises	\$0	\$0

TITLE	GRCA Fee Policy: Fee Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulations Programs and Services
DEPARTMENT	Engineering and Planning Services
APPROVED DATE	December 16, 2022 April 26, 2024
EFFECTIVE DATE	January 1, 2024 April 26, 2024

Please refer to the Fee Notes outlined below for more details.

Permit Fee Schedule	
Note: Applicants are encouraged to apply online on the GRCA Permits Application Page.	
Minor - Low risk of impact on natural hazards or natural feature. No technical reports required	
• Fee for Development Applications	\$465
• Fee for Alterations or Interference with Wetlands, Shorelines, and Watercourses Applications	\$465
Standard - Moderate risk and/or potential impact on natural hazards or natural features. Detailed report and/or plans, site visit required	
• Fee for Development Applications	\$675
• Fee for Alterations or Interference with Wetlands, Shorelines, and Watercourses Applications	\$1,185
Major - Requires one or more reports (Environmental Impact Study, Hydraulic Analysis, Stormwater Management, Geotechnical, etc.)	
• Fee for Development Applications	\$10,230
• Fee for Alterations or Interference with Wetlands, Shorelines, and Watercourses Applications	Culvert/Bridge replacement: \$6,710 All other applications: \$10,230
Large Fill - over 1,000m ³	\$10,230 plus \$0.50/m ³
Works initiated prior to GRCA approval	2 times the fee for the category
Rural Water Quality Programs or GRCA projects	\$90
Expired Permit Extension	\$90
Plans amended to an approved permit	\$90

Inquiry Schedule	
Title Clearance, Real Estate, and other Inquiry Fee (per request)	\$255/property

Plan Review Fee Schedule

Subdivision and Vacant Land Condominium	
Base fee	\$2,505
Per net hectare	\$1,305/hectare
Applicant driven modification	\$1,670
Final clearance for registration of each stage: technical review required	\$6,708
Final clearance Processing Fee: no reports or review required	\$255
Fourth (4th) and subsequent submission for review (same report)	\$575
Official Plan and/or Zoning Bylaw Amendment	
Major	\$2,500
Minor	\$465
Consent	
Major	\$1,185
Minor	\$465
Minor Variances	
Major	\$675
Minor	\$300
Site Plan Approval Applications	
Major	\$3,515
Minor	\$465
Complex Applications	\$10,230
Below Water Table Aggregate Applications	
No features of interest within <u>30-120</u> -metres of licence limit	\$10,230
Features of interest within <u>30-120</u> -metres of licence limit	\$42,850
Above Water Table Aggregate Applications	
No features of interest within <u>30-120</u> -metres of licence limit	\$465
Features of interest within <u>30-120</u> -metres of licence limit	\$10,230

2024~~3~~ Fee Notes

On April 1, 2024, the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulation (Ontario Regulation 41/24) came into effect. This regulation replaces the Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (Ontario Regulation 150/06). This Fee Schedule was updated on April 26, 2024 to reflect changes resulting from the new Regulation.

1. All fees are made payable and submitted directly to Grand River Conservation Authority.
2. Applicants are encouraged to consult with staff prior to submission of all applications to determine the extent and nature of the information required to accompany the application, and to determine the appropriate fee.
3. Applicants are encouraged to submit Permit applications through **the GRCA's online Permit Application System** after pre-submission consultation where appropriate.
4. Permit applications that fall into one or more categories will be charged one fee, at the highest rate.
5. Plan review applications that fall into one or more categories will be charged one fee, at the highest rate.
6. The Conservation Authority may provide a refund or require the applicant submit additional funds for a permit or plan review fee if it is found that an incorrect fee has been submitted.
7. Minor Categories – Low risk of impact on natural hazards ~~or natural features~~. Plans required. No technical reports or site visits required.
8. Standard Permit Category – Moderate hazard risk and/or potential impact on natural hazards ~~or natural features~~. Detailed plans required. Scoped technical reports and/or site visits required.
9. Major Permit Category– High hazard risk and/or potential impact to natural hazards ~~or natural features~~. Detailed plans required. One or more technical report required (Environmental Impact Study, Hydraulic Analysis, Storm Water Management, Geotechnical, etc.). Development permit applications for: golf courses, trailer parks, campgrounds, lifestyle communities will be considered as a major permit.
10. Major Plan Review Category– High or Moderate hazard risk and/or potential impact on natural hazards ~~or natural features~~. Detailed plans required. One or more technical reports (may be scoped) are required, and a site visit may be required.
11. Complex Plan Review Category - Planning Act (e.g. OPA/ZC) and/or Site plan applications for: golf courses, trailer parks, campgrounds, lifestyle communities.
12. Large Fill - The fee is applicable to material placed within the Conservation Authority's regulated areas. Grading associated with Planning Act approvals is not considered a large fill application.
13. Major permit applications that have previously paid application or clearance plan review fees to the GRCA will be charged fees under the Minor or Standard category.
14. Permit fees are non-refundable, except where review indicates that no permit is necessary.
- ~~15. Expired permit – After a permit has expired, a new application must be submitted. For applications to replace a prior permit received within one year of expiry a fee of \$90 is required. Permits that have expired within the last year can be renewed through the GRCA online Permit Application System. Any changes to the plans or a lapse of more than one year will require a full review and the Schedule of Fees in effect at the time will apply.~~
15. Permit Extension – Permits are valid for up to 24 months unless otherwise specified on the permit. An application for an extension is \$90 and must be requested at least 60 calendar days before the expiry of the permit. Extensions will not be granted after the expiry date and will require a new application, full review, and the Schedule of Fees in effect at the time of submission will apply. The maximum period of validity of a permit, including extensions, is 60 months.

16. The subdivision or vacant land condominium base fee including per net hectare fee will be capped at \$30,000.
17. The net hectare fee will be based on the initial submission and will exclude lands outside of the development limit (e.g. natural hazard, natural heritage areas and buffers). Stormwater management facilities and other open space or park uses are to be included in the net hectare fee calculation.
18. At the submission of a subdivision or vacant land condominium application, 70% of the base fee and per net hectare is required. Prior to issuance of conditions of draft plan approval, the remaining 30% of the fee is required.
19. A Processing Fee will apply for a clearance letter for a subdivision or condominium application where no technical review/reports (e.g. no Erosion and Sediment Control plan, SWM brief, etc.) are required.
20. For Aggregate Applications, features of interest include all [Natural Heritage, Natural Hazards including wetlands and watercourses, and surface water features.](#)
21. Responses to Title Clearances, Real Estate and other Inquiries includes: Correspondence and mapping related to natural hazards and areas regulated under Ontario Regulation [41/24150/06](#).

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-32

Date: April 26, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Permits Issued under Ontario Regulation 150/06

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-32 – Permits Issued under Ontario Regulation 150/06 be received as information.

Summary:

To provide the General Membership of the Grand River Conservation Authority with a quarterly summary of permits approved and issued by staff that conform to current Grand River Conservation Authority policies for the Administration of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation Ontario Regulation 150/06.

Report:

January, February, and March 2024 total number of permits approved and issued: **159**

City of Brantford:	6	Township of Centre Wellington:	9
City of Cambridge:	12	Township of East Garafraxa:	3
City of Guelph:	11	Township of East Zorra-Tavistock:	1
City of Hamilton:	4	Township of Guelph/Eramosa:	7
City of Kitchener:	9	Township of Mapleton:	6
City of Waterloo:	6	Township of Melancthon:	2
County of Brant:	14	Township of North Dumfries:	7
Haldimand County:	11	Township of Perth East:	5
Norfolk County:	1	Township of Puslinch:	6
Town of Erin:	2	Township of Southgate:	2
Town of Grand Valley:	5	Township of Wellesley:	1
Town of Milton:	1	Township of Wellington North:	2
Township of Amaranth:	1	Township of Wilmot:	10
Township of Blandford-Blenheim:	4	Township of Woolwich:	11

Financial Implications:

Not Applicable.

Other Department Considerations:

Not Applicable.

Prepared by:

Melissa Larion
Supervisor of Resource Planning

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-36

Date: April 23, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Kayanase Restoration Work at Arkell-Smith

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-36 – Kayanase Restoration Work at Arkell-Smith be received as information.

Summary:

The GRCA is collaborating with Kayanase, from Six Nations, on a forest restoration project at GRCA's Arkell-Smith property near Guelph (see attached map). In November 2023, the GRCA provided a letter of support to Kayanase for an application to Ontario Power Generation's (OPG) Regional Biodiversity Grant Program. Kayanase was approved for this grant to support restoration activities within recently thinned conifer plantations on the Arkell-Smith property over a three-year period. The GRCA has entered into an agreement with Kayanase providing access to this property and setting up the framework for collaboration between our two organizations. This will realize important forest restoration work at no cost to the GRCA, while facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing between GRCA and Kayanase staff.

This agreement and project will support two of GRCA's strategic priorities:

- Improving the Health of the Grand River Watershed
- To enhance Indigenous awareness, understanding and relationships

Report:

Grand River Employment & Training (Kayanase) and the GRCA have entered an Access and Project Collaboration Agreement which will allow Kayanase staff to undertake restoration activities on GRCA's Arkell-Smith property supported by funding they will receive through an OPG grant. Kayanase is a not-for-profit greenhouse and ecological restoration contractor established by Grand River Employment and Training located on Six Nations.

GRCA staff, with collaboration from Kayanase staff, will be preparing the restoration prescriptions for the project. Kayanase will be responsible for implementation of these prescriptions, with the GRCA having a facilitating role regarding any trail closures, communications etc. It is intended that this collaboration between our two organizations will facilitate opportunities for the sharing of knowledge and expertise related to ecological restoration.

The three-year agreement provides a temporary non-exclusive license for Kayanase staff to enter GRCA's Arkell Springs Smith property to undertake the restoration project. It allows for cooperation and relationship building between our two organizations, while requiring the same indemnification, insurance and health and safety requirements of a contractor engaged on GRCA lands.

Financial Implications:

The GRCA will receive (over 3 years) the following forest restoration services and material at no cost:

- 1685 planted tree\shrub seedlings
- 1000 planted forest understory plants
- 45 kg of seed (tree\shrub and understory plants) sown.
- 7 – 20 ha of Invasive species control and follow-up treatments

Also, Natural Heritage staff will benefit through the sharing of ecological knowledge, experience and perspectives while collaborating on this project with Kayanase staff.

Other Department Considerations:

Natural Heritage (Watershed Forester) will provide coordination of the on-the-ground restoration works on GRCA lands. This will require some standard communications\coordination with conservation lands, conservation area and communications staff, similar to other and ongoing forest management activity at the property. Direct staff time required of other groups would be minimal.

Prepared by:

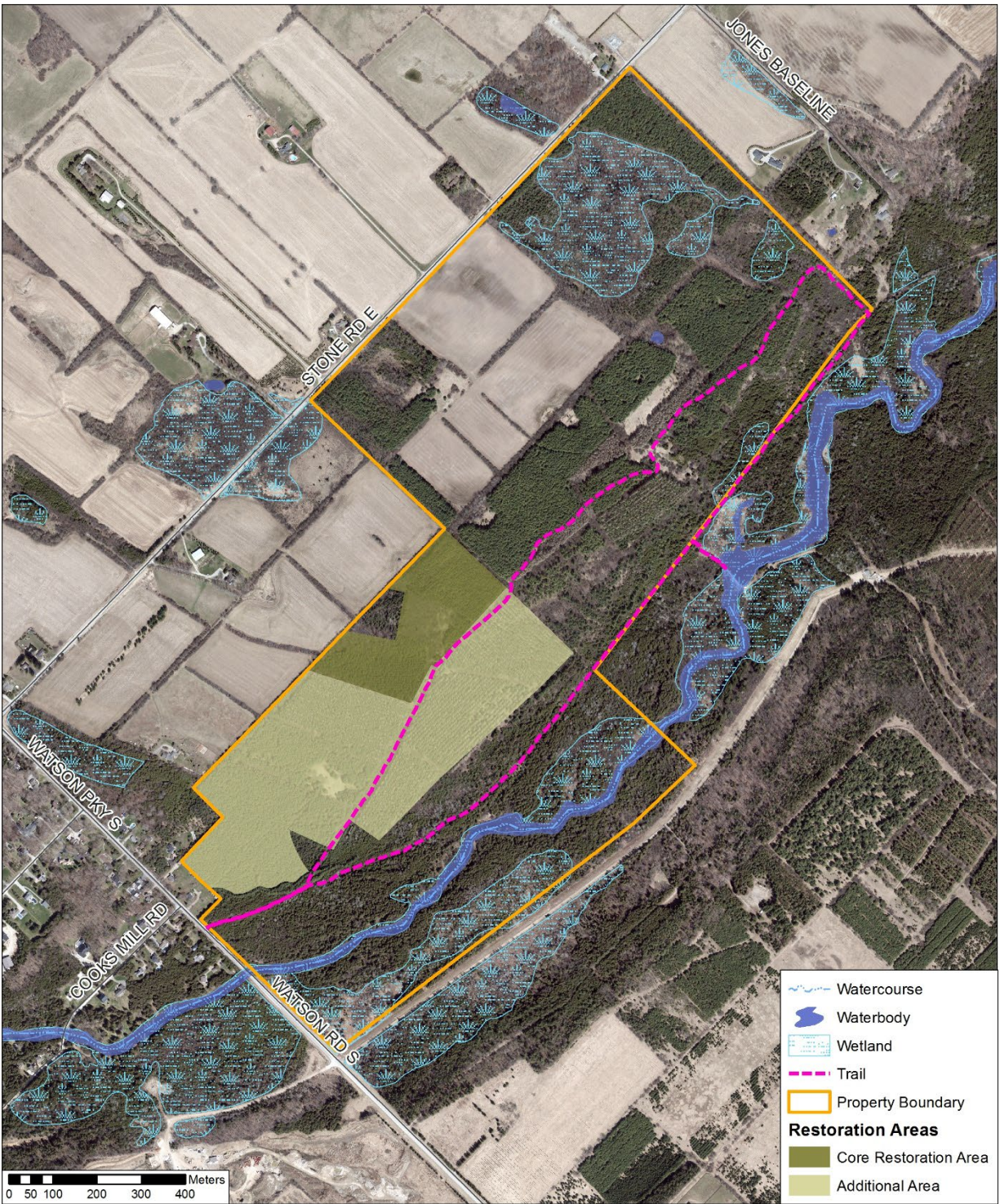
Ron Wu-Winter
Supervisor of Natural Heritage

Ron Gasparetto
Manager of Conservation Lands

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Schedule A Access Area(s) – Authority Owned Lands



Grand River
Conservation Authority
P.O. Box 729, 400 Clyde Road,
Cambridge, Ontario, N1R 5W6

GRCA Disclaimer Statement:
This map is for information purposes only, and the GRCA takes no responsibility for, nor guarantees, the accuracy of all the information contained within the map.



Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-04-24-35

Date: April 26, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Draft Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-35 – Draft Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy be received as information;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority direct staff to undertake consultation on the draft Strategy;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority send a letter to participating municipalities, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to advise them of the consultation period on the draft Strategy.

Summary:

Staff have prepared a draft Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy as required by Ontario Regulation 686/21 under the Conservation Authorities Act. The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that the GRCA's programs and services respond to watershed issues and reflect our legislated mandate. A six-week review period is proposed during which staff will engage municipalities, First Nations, and the public in review of the draft Strategy.

Report:

Staff have prepared a draft Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy (the Strategy) as required by Ontario Regulation 686/21 (the regulation) under the Conservation Authorities Act.

The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that the GRCA's programs and services respond to watershed issues and reflect our legislated mandate. The Strategy provides the watershed context and rationale for the organization's programs and identifies future directions. The main audiences for the Strategy are the Board and senior staff at participating municipalities, as funders of the GRCA's programs.

The regulation lays out required components of the Strategy. The Strategy must include Category 1 (mandatory) programs and may include Category 2 (municipal) and 3 (authority) programs. The GRCA's municipal agreements for Category 2 programs direct them to be included in the Strategy. As a result, the Strategy is inclusive of all the GRCA's programs and services.

Per the regulation, the Strategy must be complete by December 31, 2024, and posted to the GRCA's website.

Draft Strategy

The draft Strategy has been included as Appendix A for review by the Authority. The Strategy includes:

1. An overall framework of vision, mission, and guiding principles
2. A description of the Grand River watershed, stressors (population growth, agriculture, climate change), and issues (flooding and drought, water quality, natural areas)

3. A resource management strategy consisting of objectives and the programs the GRCA implements to achieve its objectives
4. Confirmation that the GRCA's Category 1 programs were reviewed and are compliant with regulatory requirements
5. A concluding section that identifies strategic priorities and actions
6. An appendix summarizing the technical studies, monitoring programs, and other information on natural resources that informs and supports program delivery

The Strategy builds on the GRCA's Strategic Plan, Programs and Services Guide, Water Management Plan, and other resources. It links to other new deliverables required by the regulation and the final version of the Strategy will incorporate recommendations from the other deliverables (e.g., Conservation Areas Strategy, Natural Hazard Asset Management Plan and operational plans, Ice Management Plan). The Strategy does not make recommendations for implementation by external parties.

Consultation

The regulation requires public and stakeholder consultation on the Strategy in a manner that the conservation authority considers advisable. The purpose of the consultation is to gather input for the Board to consider in finalizing the Strategy. Staff propose a six-week consultation period with the following elements:

- Letters to participating municipalities, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation advising of the consultation period and offering council presentations on the draft Strategy, upon request. A draft letter has been included as Appendix B.
- Presentation of the draft Strategy for discussion to 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 webinar information session on the draft Strategy. The webinar will be open to the public and advertised through a news release and social media.
- The draft Strategy will be posted on the GRCA's website throughout the review period.

The review period is tentatively planned for April 29 – June 7, 2024. A summary of comments received and a revised Strategy will be presented to the Board for consideration following the review period.

Financial Implications:

The draft Strategy has been prepared with existing staff resources and the recommendations are anticipated to be implemented with current program budgets.

Other Department Considerations:

The draft Strategy was prepared by an interdepartmental staff team.

Prepared by:

Janet Ivey
Manager of Water Resources

Approved by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy



2024 Draft

Grand River Conservation Authority



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Introduction

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) manages water and other natural resources on behalf of 38 municipalities and about one million residents of the Grand River watershed. The GRCA is a partnership of watershed municipalities and provides an avenue to work together, addressing environmental issues and opportunities that serve to benefit the entire Grand River watershed. Through programs that balance human, environmental and economic needs, the GRCA works collaboratively with all levels of government, various organizations, and members of the community to ensure the conservation, restoration and responsible management of water, land, and natural habitats in the watershed.

Vision

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

Mission

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

Guiding Principles

The GRCA's approach to watershed-based resource management and the development of the organization's programs and services is guided by 5 principles:

- The watershed is the appropriate scale for managing water and the linkages between water and other natural resources.
- A well-managed river system is crucial for a healthy watershed, sustaining prosperity, growth, well-being, and climate change resiliency.
- Collaboration is essential, as the management of water and land is a shared responsibility among the conservation authority, municipalities, First Nations, government agencies, landowners, residents, and other interest holders.
- When making decisions, the GRCA considers the broad range of water uses and values, and the needs of natural and human communities.
- The GRCA's programs adapt and respond to changing conditions, priorities, vulnerabilities, and pressures.

Purpose of the Resource Management Strategy

Under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, each Conservation Authority in Ontario is required to prepare a Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy (Strategy). The goal of the Strategy is to ensure that the GRCA's programs and services respond to watershed issues and reflect the organization's mandate under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. In developing the Strategy, watershed health and trends, program effectiveness, and other GRCA plans

and strategies that guide the organization's activities, were considered, including the following:

- The GRCA's Strategic Plan
- The Grand River Watershed Water Management Plan

Consultation

The GRCA will undertake public and stakeholder consultation on the draft Strategy. The consultation will include:

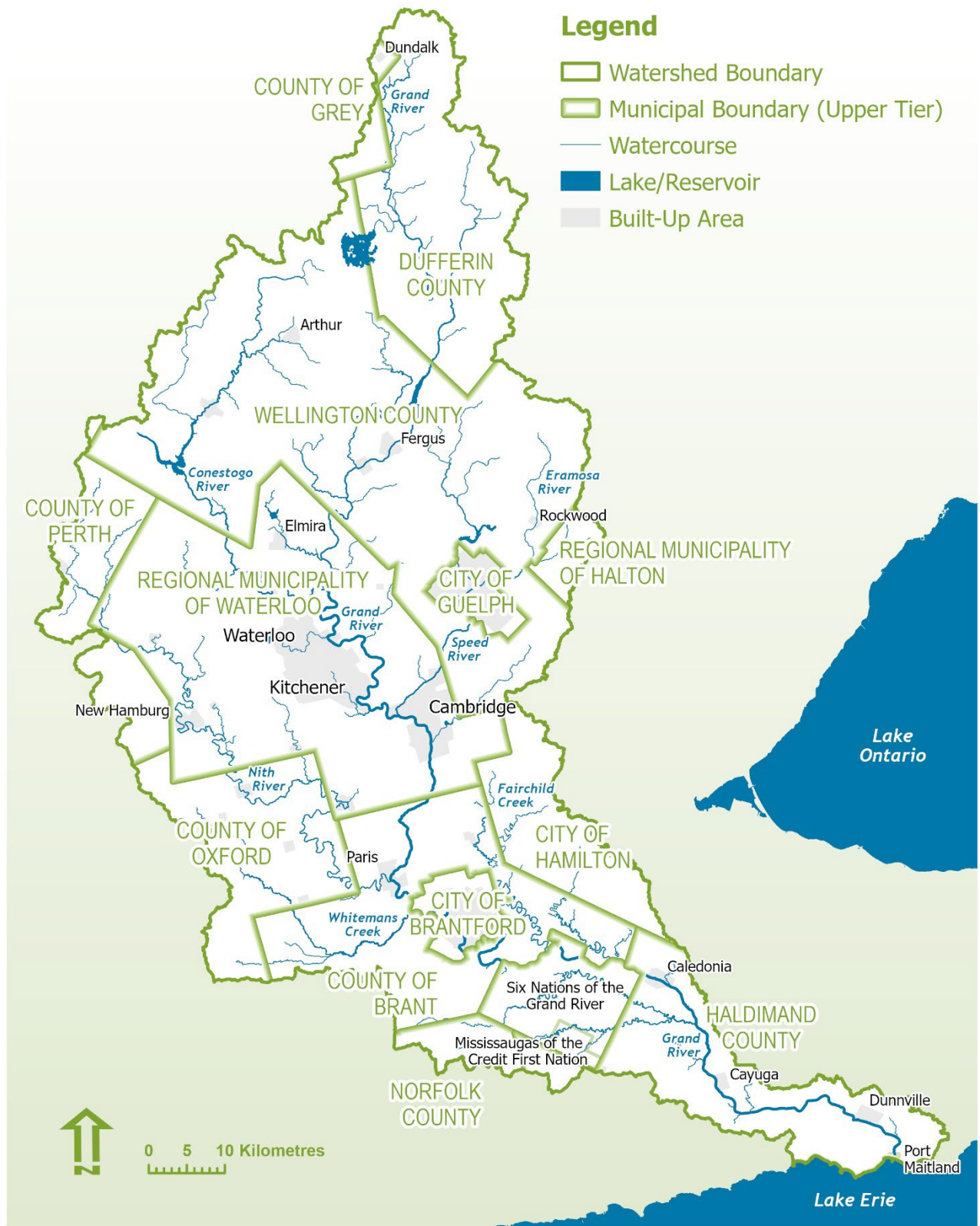
- Letters to participating municipalities, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation advising of the consultation period and offering council presentations on the draft Strategy, upon request.
- Presentation of the draft Strategy for discussion to the Grand River 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 webinar information session on the draft Strategy. The webinar will be open to the public and advertised through a news release and social media.
- The draft Strategy will be posted on the GRCA's website throughout the review period of April 29 - June 7, 2024.

A summary of comments received and a revised Strategy will be presented to the GRCA Board for consideration following the review period.

The Grand River 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 (about 1 million). 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 Whitemans and Fairchild creeks.

Indigenous Peoples 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 Indigenous Peoples 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. Today about 80% of the watershed's population lives in the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, Guelph, and Brantford. The Grand River is home to the Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.



The Grand River was designated a Canadian Heritage River in 1994. The designation recognizes the outstanding human heritage values and excellent recreational opportunities along the river and its tributaries.

The Landscape

The biophysical characteristics, namely the soils, geology, and the location and extent of natural areas within the watershed, have determined how water moves through the landscape and how humans have used the land.

European settlement led to rapid deforestation and the draining of wetlands. Tile drainage was and continues to be prevalent within the northern and western portions of the watershed, where groundwater tends to be close to the ground surface. Private and municipal drains were deemed necessary to create conditions suitable for agricultural production within these areas.

In the central and eastern watershed, moraines deposited during glacial periods have created a hilly landscape with large sand and gravel deposits, which have led to the development of aggregate extraction operations. The rich, well-drained soils of the moraines have also supported extensive agricultural production and the growth and expansion of urban areas within the Region of Waterloo and portions of Wellington and Brant counties. About 14% of the watershed's land area has been urbanized.

The Norfolk Sand Plain, in the southwestern part of the central watershed, is also rich in water and is intensively used for both mixed farming and cash crops. Finally, much of the clay plain in the southern watershed is poorly drained and is used predominantly as livestock pasture and for soybean, corn, and hay production. Agriculture remains the largest land use in the watershed with 61% of the total watershed area.

About 16% of the watershed is covered by woodlands, which include upland forests and lowland swamps. Woodlands are most extensive in the Speed River and McKenzie Creek basins and least extensive in urban areas and the agricultural clay plains. Wetlands cover just 10% of the watershed and are most widespread in the northeast and Whitemans Creek basin.

The Groundwater System

A key feature of the watershed is its major moraine systems, including the Orangeville, Waterloo, and Paris and Galt moraines. The moraines have extensive sand and gravel deposits, and their overburden aquifers provide groundwater for municipal and private use. The extensive sand and gravel deposits associated with the Norfolk Sand Plain also yield substantial water supplies to local users. Bedrock aquifers are also an important source of water for municipalities and private water users, including the Gasport, Guelph, and Salina formations.

Municipal and private well supplies, and the baseflows in many cold water creeks and wetlands, are reliant upon groundwater recharge and discharge. Groundwater discharge also supports the Grand River itself, particularly between Cambridge and Brantford, providing a significant portion of the river's flow during summer months. In the reach between Cambridge

and Paris, groundwater discharge, in combination with the river's steep gradient and limited direct drainage, contributes to water quality improvements downstream, including moderating temperatures and increasing dissolved oxygen levels.

The Surface Water System

There are about 9,900 kilometres of rivers and streams draining the Grand River watershed. Streamflow is a result of runoff from precipitation (rainfall or snowmelt), discharges from storage features (wetlands, ponds and reservoirs) and groundwater discharge. Streams that are primarily runoff fed tend to be flashy with quick transitions from high flood flows to low baseflow. Streams that are primarily groundwater fed tend to be slower to respond during a flood event and maintain high baseflow throughout the year.

The upper watershed till plains generate high surface runoff that results in high flood flows, but little to no flow in watercourses during sustained dry periods. Multi-purpose reservoirs were built on the fringe of these till plains to manage surface runoff following significant floods and droughts in the 1930s. The reservoirs capture runoff during spring snow melt and heavy rain events. Dams at each of these reservoirs release stored water during the summer and fall to augment or maintain flow in the river system.

In the central portion of the watershed, stream flows are maintained by groundwater discharge and flow augmentation from upstream reservoirs. Urbanization prior to stormwater management requirements in this part of the watershed has led to an increase in surface runoff from impervious areas.

The southern clay plains produce extremely high surface runoff. In this area, Grand River flows are sustained by upstream flow augmentation and groundwater discharge while smaller watercourses have very little flow during dry periods.

About 100 native and non-native fish species and 30 native mussel species live within the Grand River and its tributaries. Of these, 20 species (11 fishes and 9 mussels) are listed as aquatic species at risk in Ontario or Canada.

Groundwater helps sustain cold water fish species such as native brook trout and non-native brown trout and rainbow trout, which are highly valued by the angling community. Important cold water tributaries include Blair Creek, Blue Springs Creek, Laurel Creek, Strasburg Creek, Mill Creek (Puslinch) and Whiteman's Creek. The Conestogo River and Grand River both support brown trout tailwater fisheries. Cool water discharged from the bottom of the reservoirs provides oxygenated water to sustain these populations.

Watershed Drivers and Stressors

The Grand River watershed, a highly diverse and interconnected system, has been altered by activities such as deforestation, tile draining, agricultural production, and urbanization. As human communities grew, flood control, municipal drinking water supply, and wastewater management were necessary to protect local communities from flooding and erosion hazards and pollution.

The health of the watershed and its communities continues to be influenced by drivers and stressors that shape and change ecosystem functions and conditions. These include population growth-related changes to land cover and resource use, extensive agricultural production, and climate change.

People and population growth

The watershed's urban centres are within the outer ring of the Greater Golden Horseshoe area – one of the fastest growing regions in North America. The watershed's population will grow to over 1.5 million by 2051 with annual municipal growth rates of between 1.3 and 1.6%. Municipalities will accommodate growth through a mixture of intensification of existing urban areas and urban area expansions. Some of the growth is projected to occur in smaller communities in sensitive areas of the watershed. This growth will put pressure on the quality and supply of water resources. More people need more water and generate more treated wastewater.

As the population grows, it will be important to have sufficient water supplies for communities, economies, and ecosystems. While the watershed's communities remain heavily reliant on groundwater for drinking water, four communities draw drinking water from the Grand River, and three communities rely on water from a Great Lake. A lot of the urban growth is on moraines, the source of drinking water for many communities.

Urban areas are growing at the expense of farmland and urban stormwater is an important pressure to manage regionally. Many of the old urban centres in the watershed do not have stormwater management, which can result in erosion, poor water quality, and localized flooding.

An increasing population means continued pressure on the river's ability to absorb nutrients and other pollutants. The same inland river that supplies drinking water also receives treated effluent from 30 wastewater treatment plants and supports thriving agricultural lands.

As communities grow, land use changes from a more rural or naturalized environment to an urban environment. New developments and intensification can reduce the area of permeable surfaces for water infiltration, and result in habitat loss, fragmentation, or alteration, including the establishment of invasive species, all of which impact biodiversity and the quality and resilience of natural areas.

As southern Ontario's population grows, so too does the demand for open, natural spaces, nature-based recreation, and outdoor experiences. This places pressure on the ecosystems and infrastructure of the GRCA's passive-use conservation lands and active-use conservation areas.

Agricultural production

The Grand River watershed accounts for about 30% of the farmland and a third of the farms in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and about a tenth of the farmland in Ontario. Livestock producers in the watershed contribute more than half of the cattle, swine, and poultry raised in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area, and almost a quarter of what is produced in the entire province. Water is needed for livestock production and irrigating crops. Wetland removal and

tile drainage reduces landscape water storage. Surface runoff from agricultural landscapes can affect soil health and water quality and quantity by transporting nutrients and sediment.

Climate change

Climate change is a global issue that has already started impacting us locally. In the Grand River watershed, rising air temperatures and a shift from traditional spring high flows to more mid-winter melts, early winter floods, and later spring and summer high flows have been observed. Winter snowpacks are shrinking but winter rainfalls are more common. As the climate changes, it will have implications for water temperature, ice cover, and the frequency and extent of flooding and drought.

Watershed Issues and Challenges

There is a long history of watershed planning in the Grand River basin. Over the past century, many plans have been implemented to deal with critical problems such as flooding, drought, poor water quality, and loss of natural areas. While decades of collaborative work have resulted in some gains, such as in forest cover and improvements in water quality, critical challenges remain and must be addressed to ensure the watershed can continue to support growing communities and healthy ecosystems.

Flooding and drought

The Grand River system has a long history of flooding. Floods can occur in all seasons: during the spring melt, following major rainstorms in summer and fall, and during a rapid snowmelt or because of an ice jam in the winter. The Grand River downstream of Cayuga to Port Maitland and the Lake Erie shoreline are also subject to flooding from Lake Erie.

The GRCA operates seven multi-purpose dams and reservoirs that are vital to protecting the health and safety of watershed communities. The major dams, Shand, Luther, Conestogo and Guelph, are operated as a system to reduce flood damages and augment river flows to support municipal water supply withdrawals and improve the capacity of the Grand River to receive treated wastewater. The other dams, Woolwich, Laurel Creek and Shade's Mills, influence the local tributary on which they are situated.

While efforts have been made to reduce flood risk, there remain 17 flood damage centres within the watershed – communities that have several structures located within the floodplain and have a higher risk of riverine flooding. The risk of flooding can never be completely eliminated, and climate change may alter the frequency and severity of flooding experienced by watershed communities. It remains critical to regulate development in the floodplain to prevent the loss of life and property damage due to flooding and erosion.

The large water management reservoirs add water to the Grand, Conestogo, and Speed rivers during low-flow periods. The GRCA operates the dams to achieve flow targets to support downstream municipal water supply and wastewater assimilation. Between 2011 and 2017, reservoirs provided sufficient water to meet the operational river targets more than 95% of the time. However, in exceptionally dry years, flows can be lower than the targets for short periods. Further, creeks and streams in the “uncontrolled” areas of the watershed lack

upstream reservoirs to provide flow augmentation. At these times, voluntary water conservation by all users is important.

Water quality

The Grand River empties into Lake Erie which is connected to one of the most important freshwater systems in the world. In 2022, the governments of Canada and the United States assessed the state of Lake Erie as “poor” due to elevated nutrient concentrations and algal blooms. The Grand River is the largest tributary that discharges into the eastern basin of Lake Erie, and it contributes more than half of the total phosphorus load to the eastern basin.

Although the background or natural water quality across the watershed varies considerably due to geology, runoff from urban and rural areas and waste assimilation from 30 wastewater treatment plants heavily influence the water quality issues seen in both surface and groundwater.

Agricultural nonpoint sources account for over 90% of the total load of phosphorus, a nutrient, in the upper middle part of the watershed. Because of this, supporting farmers and rural landowners as stewards of land and water resources helps protect the drinking water sources and wastewater assimilation capacity for downstream municipalities.

While substantive progress has been achieved through wastewater treatment plant upgrades and operational improvements, continued effort is required to maintain the reductions realized through optimization as technology and personnel change. More work is required to help reduce non-point sources of total phosphorus and other nutrients including improving urban and rural stormwater management.

In some areas, aquifers are vulnerable to land-based activities, including urban development, agriculture, and management practices such as the application of road salt, manure, or fertilizer. Elevated levels of nitrates, chlorides, sodium, and industrial contaminants in groundwater are issues in some parts of the watershed.

Natural areas

Forests and wetlands in the watershed help to clean the air and water, store and release water, and provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. However, the watershed has changed dramatically over the past 200 years and most of the forests and wetlands have been cleared. Forest cover in the Grand watershed is generally low, especially in urban areas and productive farmlands.

Many wetlands and woodlots are small and isolated but remain important for wildlife, water storage, and nutrient removal. Smaller natural areas may be more vulnerable to adjacent land practices and development pressure. Habitat loss and fragmentation prevents the movement of animals and plants, which become less abundant and more geographically restricted. In contrast, invasive plants and animals are becoming more abundant and widespread, threatening native species.

Large and relatively diverse natural areas help make the watershed more resilient in the face of climate change and human-induced disturbances. Some larger and biologically diverse natural areas remain in the Grand watershed. Noteworthy natural areas include the forests

located on the Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit reserves, forested valleys along the Grand River and some tributaries, the Dunnville Marsh, and the Beverly, Oakland, and Roseville Swamps. Luther Marsh, a popular birding and hunting destination, is designated a provincially significant wetland, an area of natural and scientific interest, and a nationally important bird area.

Additional information on Grand River watershed conditions and issues can be found in the Water Management Plan, the State of Water Resources report, Natural Heritage Characterization Reports, and other technical resources available on the GRCA's website www.grandriver.ca.

Resource Management Strategy

The future prosperity, growth and sustainability of the communities in the watershed depend on a healthy river system. Population growth, greenfield development and urbanization, agricultural production and a changing climate will continue to exert pressure on the quality and supply of water and land resources. Addressing existing and emerging resource management issues is critical for all who live, work and recreate here. Water and ecosystems are shared resources and consequently, responsibility is shared for their management.

The GRCA's resource management strategy is driven by the organization's legislative mandate under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, watershed issues, and municipal needs.

The GRCA's programs and services have been developed to address these needs.

Objectives

The objectives of the GRCA's Resource Management Strategy are to:

1. Protect life and minimize property damage from natural hazards, including drought, flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, and hazardous lands and sites.
2. Manage water to ensure sustainable water supplies for communities, economies and ecosystems.
3. Improve water quality to enhance river health and reduce the river's impact on Lake Erie.
4. Protect, enhance, and restore natural areas to improve ecosystem health and resilience.
5. Protect drinking water sources from contamination and overuse.
6. Connect people to the environment through outdoor experiences.
7. Manage the GRCA's landholdings in a responsible and sustainable way.

Programs and Services

The GRCA's programs and services contribute to achieving the watershed-based resource management strategy's objectives. Programs and services are summarized below and

additional information on the programs and the technical studies, monitoring, and other information that guide implementation of the programs, can be found in Appendix A.

Monitoring watershed conditions

The GRCA maintains a system of monitoring stations that collects information on weather, river flows, reservoir and lake levels, groundwater, ice conditions, and water quality. Data obtained through several monitoring programs provides the information needed to understand current conditions, identify trends, and project future changes.

Monitoring infrastructure plays a key role in public safety, as it supports the GRCA's flood forecasting and warning program and other services. The information supports day-to-day decisions about reservoir operations as well as low water response and long-range water management planning. Gauges and monitoring stations are located throughout the watershed. These include:

- Fifteen air temperature stations, 25 rainfall stations, and four precipitation stations capable of measuring snow, rain, and mixed precipitation. This information is supplemented by snow surveys conducted at 12 locations and weather radar data.
- Sixty real-time flow gauges measure changes in water levels in streams, rivers, reservoirs, and Lake Erie.
- Surface water quality is measured at 34 locations under the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and at nine automated stations that provide continuous reports on water temperature, pH levels, conductivity, and dissolved oxygen. Some stations have the ability to monitor nitrate levels continuously.
- Groundwater levels and quality are measured at 38 wells under the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network. Groundwater levels are measured at an additional 16 wells across the watershed to inform drought management.

Visual observations of flood and ice jam conditions are also important sources of information. A River Watch program uses field staff to confirm and report conditions during flood events and additional information is provided by cameras installed at main ice jam areas like West Montrose and Brantford, for continuous monitoring.

Some of the GRCA's monitoring data is shared on the website so that watershed residents and municipal staff can view near-real time information and make decisions based on conditions being reported.

Managing the risk of natural hazards

The GRCA has programs and services to manage risks related to natural hazards, including flooding, drought, erosion, wetlands, dynamic beaches, and other hazardous sites and lands. The GRCA's natural hazard risk reduction program includes structural and nonstructural methods of reducing flooding and other damages. Structural methods include water control structures such as dams, dikes, and channel works. Non-structural methods include flood forecasting and warning, emergency preparedness, and planning and regulation of development in floodplains and other hazard lands.

The GRCA's programs include:

- Flood forecasting and warning: The GRCA collects and maintains data from dams, streamflow gauges, rainfall gauges and snow courses to monitor and forecast conditions, issue warnings for riverine and ice jam flooding, and maintain communications and emergency response systems. The GRCA also provides support to municipal emergency management personnel.
- Water control structures: The GRCA operates and maintains 7 major flood control structures, 5 major dike systems, and 21 small dams. The GRCA has established daily reservoir target levels – called “rule curves” – to guide reservoir operations. The rule curves provide guidance on balancing the competing objectives of having sufficient water available for flow augmentation while maintaining space available to help manage downstream flooding.
- Low water response: The GRCA coordinates and supports delivery of the provincial Ontario Low Water Response Program within the Grand River watershed.
- Natural hazard mapping: The GRCA updates and maintains mapping of rivers, streams, floodplains, and other natural hazards, such as wetlands, steep slopes and the Lake Erie shoreline.
- Planning and regulations: A permit is required under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* for development and other activities in regulated areas such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes along waterways, watercourses and the Lake Erie shoreline. About one-quarter of the land area of the Grand River watershed is regulated. The GRCA processes permits and also reviews municipal planning documents and development applications under the *Planning Act* and other legislation to manage natural hazards.
- The GRCA generates hydro revenue from turbines at four dams (Shand, Conestogo, Guelph, and Drimmie dams).

Conserving and managing lands

The GRCA owns approximately 19,900 hectares of land, which represents about 3% of the watershed. The GRCA's landholdings are used for a variety of purposes that support the organization's programs and services including lands for water control infrastructure, outdoor recreation, environmental education, natural areas, agricultural and commercial leases, rental properties, and lands under maintenance agreements. The landholdings include fee-for-use conservation areas, conservation lands with no entrance fees, and lands with limited or restricted access, including about 750 cottage lots at Belwood Lake and Conestogo Lake.

GRCA-owned lands make important contributions to biodiversity and ecosystem functions within the watershed. GRCA land acquisition policies and priorities, along with significant ecological restoration activities, have resulted in a land holding with a high concentration of natural areas, including many that contain sensitive or rare species and communities.

Although the GRCA's lands cover 3% of the watershed, they contain 11% of the watershed's wetlands and 7% of its forests. More than half of the GRCA's lands contain natural hazard

features such as floodplain, wetlands, or waterbodies. The GRCA undertakes multi-scale projects to conserve, restore, and enhance natural areas for biodiversity, to improve ecological connectivity and resiliency, to protect drinking water sources, and mitigate the impacts of flooding and erosion.

Providing outdoor recreational opportunities

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. Many of these areas have been established surrounding the multi-purpose reservoirs, offering aesthetic lakeside appeal and access to water-based recreation. They provide a wide range of recreational opportunities such as camping, hiking, swimming, fishing, and picnicking. The GRCA offers the second-largest camping program in Ontario and houses two of the province's largest outdoor pools at Brant and Byng Island Conservation Areas. Six Grand River Conservation Areas are open year-round and offer additional winter programs such as hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing.

The Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area offers a different, and more limited, range of activities and facilities. 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.

In addition to the Grand River Conservation Areas, the GRCA's landholdings include Conservation Lands which have no controlled entrances, no entrance fees, and no onsite staff, and offer passive recreational experiences such as hiking, birding, and photography. These include about 75 kilometers of GRCA-owned trails formed on old railway corridors.

Protecting drinking water sources

The Grand River Conservation Authority is a Source Protection Authority (SPA) with responsibilities for protecting municipal drinking water sources. Under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, the GRCA is the lead SPA for the Lake Erie Source Protection Region, consisting of the Grand River, Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, and Long Point Region source protection areas. The GRCA maintains the multi-interest holder Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee and ensures the science-based Assessment Reports and Source Protection Plans are kept current for each source protection area. The SPA supports municipalities and other implementers of source protection policies and reports annually on progress towards implementing the source protection plans.

Improving water quality

The quality of the waters that flow in streams and rivers, and in groundwater, is vitally important to the people, communities, and aquatic plants and animals in the watershed:

- Four communities get some or all of their drinking water from the river,
- Municipalities and First Nations operate wastewater treatment plants that discharge treated effluent into the rivers,
- Farmers depend on the river for water for irrigation and livestock,

- Many watershed residents and visitors recreate in and near the river, and
- The rivers, streams and wetlands are rich ecosystems. More than 80 types of fish, representing half of the species in Canada, live in the river system.

The GRCA uses information gained through water quality monitoring, modelling, and applied research to better understand and manage the river. This allows the GRCA, municipalities, the province, and other agencies to take action to improve surface water and groundwater quality and the health of streams, rivers, and Lake Erie. The GRCA's water quality program includes:

- Surface water quality monitoring, modelling, analysis and reporting, and groundwater quality analysis and reporting.
- Providing technical support for municipal wastewater studies. The Grand River Simulation Model (GRSM) is a computer model that gives GRCA, municipalities and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks a better understanding of the potential impact of proposed sewage treatment plant improvements. The model covers the Grand River from the Shand Dam to Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Speed River from Guelph Lake to Cambridge.
- The Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization program enables and engages operators and managers of wastewater treatment plants with tools and approaches to improve wastewater treatment process control. This is accomplished through knowledge sharing workshops, hands-on training, technical advice, and delivering a recognition program. By working together, the amount of phosphorus and ammonia discharged in the Grand River watershed has been reduced.
- The GRCA also engages the provincial and federal governments to develop programs to reduce nutrient loads in rivers and streams, and ultimately Lake Erie. Implementation of the Water Management Plan is a key action in the Canada-Ontario Lake Erie Action Plan.

Providing conservation services to landowners and residents

The GRCA works closely with rural landowners to help them conserve and enhance natural resources on their land and improve and protect water quality and watershed health. The GRCA delivers municipal and partnership cost-share programs to support private land stewardship.

Through the Rural Water Quality Program and other grant programs, GRCA provides information, resources, and financial grants to landowners related to stewardship action, including agricultural best practices, private water well maintenance, tree planting and naturalization projects. The GRCA also facilitates private land, municipal and community partner tree planting, and coordinates education and outreach activities to promote actions to improve water quality and watershed health.

Watershed sciences and collaborative planning

Protecting and improving watershed health is a shared responsibility among municipalities, First Nations, industry, landowners, residents, organizations, and the GRCA.

There is a long history of watershed planning in the Grand River basin. Over the past century, many plans have been implemented to deal with critical problems such as flooding, low water quality and low flows. The studies were a response to the serious problems threatening the health and economic vitality of communities in the early part of the 20th century.

The GRCA supports and facilitates a collaborative Water Management Plan with municipalities, provincial and federal government agencies, and First Nations to discuss water management challenges and to develop best-value solutions. The Plan is similar to a municipal master plan in that it is a system-wide, or watershed-wide approach to address overall needs and to achieve common goals. It provides a framework for collective and collaborative action on water management that goes beyond municipal boundaries.

The goals of the Water Management Plan are to:

1. Ensure water supplies,
2. Improve water quality to improve river health and reduce the river's impact on Lake Erie,
3. Reduce flood damage potential, and
4. Build resilience to deal with climate change.

The GRCA facilitates watershed water management by convening the Water Managers Working Group. This group is made up of senior managers of municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities, First Nations, and government water programs. The group reports on the actions that their agency has committed to and discusses issues that cross municipal boundaries.

The GRCA also partners with municipalities on subwatershed (i.e., smaller river and stream) plans and studies, which provide background on surface water, groundwater, natural hazards and natural heritage systems, and recommend sustainable solutions for urban growth and servicing, and ecosystem restoration.

Outdoor Environmental Education

Since 1973, the GRCA has been actively connecting children and adults with nature by offering outdoor education programs. These programs provide people of all ages with an opportunity to engage with the local environment of the Grand River watershed. The hands-on, experiential, curriculum-based field trips for students from preschool to grade 12 form the core of the GRCA's outdoor environmental education program. The GRCA's programs encourage exploration and discovery to foster a connection to the local environment. Students spend at least 60 per cent of their field trip outdoors and educators bring classroom learning to life.

The GRCA currently provides outdoor environmental education to almost 30,000 students each year, through field trips by school groups to five nature centres, along with at-school visits and some virtual program delivery.

In addition to the school programming, the nature centres currently offer limited opportunities for nature-based activities for families, organizations and community groups. These programs focus on outdoor skills and nature discovery.

Looking Forward

The Grand River Conservation Authority plays important roles in protecting people and property from natural hazards, improving the health of the watershed, and connecting people to the environment through outdoor experiences. In preparing this Strategy, strategic risks and issues affecting the GRCA's resource management objectives were considered.

Through development of the Strategy, the GRCA's mandatory programs for managing the risk of natural hazards, conserving and managing the organization's lands, protecting drinking water sources, and delivering provincial surface water and groundwater monitoring programs were reviewed. The GRCA's programs comply with regulatory requirements and provide value to watershed municipalities, landowners, and residents.

As communities continue to grow, climate changes, and competing pressures rise on lands and waters, programs and priorities must adapt to continue to be effective. The GRCA's programs are reviewed and collaborative plans, such as the Water Management Plan, are updated to incorporate new information and directions as needed.

The outcomes of many programs are reviewed periodically against established criteria. For instance, the Water Management Plan and related reports document the flood reduction benefits of the GRCA's dams and dikes and the reliability with which reservoir operations have been able to meet flow targets during dry weather. Annual reports from the Watershed-wide Wastewater Optimization Program document reductions in nutrient loading to the Grand River resulting from infrastructure investments and operational improvements.

Implementation of the drinking water source protection plan is assessed annually. Finally, the GRCA assesses and reports on watershed conditions regularly.

Strong relationships with local, municipal, First Nations, provincial, and federal partners are critical for the GRCA to achieve its resource management objectives. It remains particularly important to engage and collaborate with provincial and federal agencies, as they establish guidelines and standards, and provide essential funding for core program areas (e.g., floodplain mapping, water infrastructure, drinking water source protection). With almost 90 years of watershed management experience, the GRCA has a lot of knowledge to offer to partners to inform efforts to address new challenges, like climate change.

The GRCA's watershed-based resource management priorities are to:

- Continue to deliver effective watershed programs that respond to watershed issues, municipal needs, and regulatory requirements,
- Continue to collaborate with municipalities, First Nations, provincial and federal agencies, and watershed organizations, landowners, and residents,

- Assess and respond to the impacts of population growth, land use change, and resource use on the health of the Grand River watershed, and
- Assess and respond to the impacts of climate change on natural hazards and the health of the Grand River watershed.

These priorities will be advanced through the following actions:

- Update the GRCA's Strategic Plan as needed
- Update the Water Management Plan and Implementation Action Plan as needed
- Build relationships among organizations through participation in working groups and committees that align with the GRCA's programs and services. These include the Provincial Flood Forecasting and Warning Committee, Dam Owners Advisory Committee, Canadian Dam Association, Canadian Standards Association (Climate Change and Dam Operations), Ontario Water Power Association, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and related Lake Erie teams, and various program-specific Conservation Ontario-led working groups.
- [To be added - high-level actions/priorities from the other regulatory deliverables as they are completed (e.g., Natural Hazard Asset Management Plan, Operational Plans, Ice Management Plan, Conservation Areas Strategy)]

Updates to the Strategy

The Strategy will be reviewed every 5 years and updated as needed. Municipalities, First Nations, other partners and interest holders will be engaged in future updates to the Strategy. Prior to publication of any updates to the Strategy, interest holders and the public will be consulted in a method that is appropriate at the time of the update.

Appendix A: Summary of technical studies, monitoring programs, and other information that guide the GRCA's programs

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
Category 1 – Mandatory		
Watershed management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate monitoring stations. • Complete field sampling in support of the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) and Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGWN). • Maintain water budget to support sustainable water use in the watershed. • Operate a drought response program. • Provide advice on water use permits to province. • Report on emerging climate change impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy • Natural Hazard Infrastructure Operational Plans • Natural Hazard Infrastructure Asset Management Plan • Water Management Plan and historical water management plans as listed on the GRCA's website: Historical Documents • Data collected under the PWQMN, PGMN • Data on precipitation, river flows, reservoir and lake levels, from 56 stream flow gauges, 24 rainfall gauges, and 12 snow courses • Data on groundwater levels from 52 dedicated monitoring wells to inform drought response • Geospatial data
Flood forecasting and warning and floodplain mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain computerized (Flood Forecasting and Warning) FFW system. • Operate 24 hour on call/duty officer system to respond to flooding events. • Maintain Communications and Emergency Response systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on precipitation, river flows, reservoir and lake levels, from 56 stream flow gauges, 24 rainfall gauges, and 12 snow courses • Flood and ice observations and data gathered from River Watch program and webcams • Digital elevation models and other geospatial data

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and maintain data from dams, streamflow gauges, rainfall gauges, and snow courses, as well as collect weather forecast from various sources • Issue flood warnings • Operate reservoirs to reduce flooding. • Update and maintain flood line mapping. • Develop natural hazards mapping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watercourse and floodplain mapping • Hydrologic and hydraulic models • Natural Hazard Infrastructure Operational Plans • Natural Hazard Infrastructure Asset Management Plan • Ice Management Plan • Reservoir Operation • Water Management Plan and historical water management plans as listed on the GRCA’s website: Historical Documents
Water control structures – flood control, small dams and ice management	<p><u>Flood Control Structures</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate and maintain 7 major flood control structures, 5 major dike systems. • Perform dam safety reviews, inspections, monitoring, and capital maintenance and upgrade projects. • Develop and implement public safety plans for structures. <p><u>Small Dams</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate and maintain 21 small dams and surrounding lands. <p><u>Ice Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Ice Management Activities and respond to Flooding from ice jams by issuing flood warnings and providing support to municipal emergency management personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Hazard Infrastructure Operational Plans, Operational, Maintenance and Surveillance Manuals • Natural Hazard Infrastructure Asset Management Plan • Ice Management Plan • Dam Safety Maturity Matrix Evaluation – Dam Management Program Priorities • Reservoir Operating Policy, Maintenance of Water Control Structures Policy • Data on precipitation, river flows, reservoir and lake levels, from 56 stream flow gauges, 24 rainfall gauges, and 12 snow courses • Flood and ice observations and data gathered from River Watch program and webcams • Inspections, dam and dike safety studies

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Management Plan and historical water management plans as listed on the GRCA's website: Historical Documents
Resource planning – plan input and review, permitting and solicitor inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process permits related to development, alteration or other activities in regulated areas. Review official plans, secondary and community plans, zoning bylaws, development applications and other proposals (i.e., environmental assessments) Enforce applicable regulations. Develop and maintain policies and guidelines to manage natural hazards. Provide advisory services to the province and municipalities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Authorities Act and related regulations, including O. Reg. 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits GRCA Policies for the Administration of the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulation (O. Reg. 41/24) Mapping of natural hazards (e.g., watercourses, wetlands, unstable soil or bedrock, shoreline areas affected by flooding, erosion of dynamic beach hazards) and regulated areas and other geospatial data Shoreline Management Plan for Lake Erie Various subwatershed studies and plans as listed on the GRCA's website: Watershed Planning
Conservation lands management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain passive conservation areas. Maintain property integrity (i.e., encroachments) and security (unauthorized use) Develop and maintain trail networks on GRCA owned land. Manage natural hazards on GRCA properties Capital and operational support services provided to maintain the built infrastructure on GRCA owned land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Strategy Land Inventory GRCA Forest Management Plan Ecological Land Classification, Hazard Tree Database and other Geospatial data Property-specific management plans and master plans, including those for Dumfries Conservation, Puslinch Tract, Snyder's Flats, Dunnville Marshes, and the Niska Land Holdings

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain Asset Management Plan for built infrastructure on GRCA owned land. • Dispose of lands declared surplus and plan for disposition of other surplus lands. • Acquire environmentally significant conservation lands (greenspace management). • Operate hazard tree management program on GRCA owned land. • Deliver forest management, tree planting, woodlot thinning, selective harvesting, and naturalization projects on GRCA owned land. • Maintain the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program. • Invasive Species Management on GRCA owned land. • Provide planning services/assistance to enhance, restore, rehabilitate, and protect aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems on GRCA owned lands. 	
Source protection planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver the provincial source protection planning program under the <i>Clean Water Act, 2006</i> for the Lake Erie Source Protection Region made up of four watersheds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water Act, 2006 and associated regulations • Grand River Assessment Report • Grand River Source Protection Plan • Geospatial data
Category 2 – Municipal		
Subwatershed services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and recommend where subwatershed or watershed studies are needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various subwatershed studies and plans as listed on the GRCA's website: Watershed Planning

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and provide input to subwatershed studies or other regional-scale technical studies Undertake subwatershed monitoring to support municipal studies under agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geospatial data Water Management Plan and related reporting on watershed conditions as listed on the GRCA's website: Studies and Reports
Conservation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver municipal and partnership cost-share programs to support private land stewardship action Facilitate private land, municipal and community partner tree planting Coordinate education and outreach activities to promote watershed health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Management Plan and related reporting on watershed conditions as listed on the GRCA's website: Studies and Reports Geospatial data
Water quality programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support optimization of wastewater treatment plant operations through workshops, hands-on training, technical advice, and recognition awards Provide technical support for municipal assimilative capacity studies and water/wastewater services Surface water quality monitoring, modelling, analysis and reporting, groundwater quality analysis and reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Management Plan and related reporting on watershed conditions as listed on the GRCA's website: Studies and Reports Annual reports on wastewater treatment plant performance Data collected under the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network Data collected at 9 automated water quality stations provide continuous reports on water temperature, pH levels, conductivity and dissolved oxygen Additional surface water quality or groundwater quality data collected for special studies Geospatial data

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
Watershed sciences and collaborative planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed and landscape scale science and reporting • Support cross-disciplinary integration and inform municipal watershed planning and water, wastewater, and stormwater master planning through the Grand River Water Management Plan and Water Managers Working Group • Liaise with provincial, federal agencies, NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy • Water Management Plan and related reporting on watershed conditions as listed on the GRCA's website: Studies and Reports • Natural Heritage Characterization Reports • Grand River Fisheries Management Plan • A Watershed Forest Plan for the Grand River • Geospatial data
Category 3 - Other		
Burford Tree Nursery and Planting Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide services to private and public landowners and community groups to engage in tree planting activities. • Operate the Burford Tree Nursery. 	
Conservation services – special projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver special projects that study and/or provide awareness and education related to improving and protecting water quality and related initiatives. This may include special events such as water festivals. • Develop and deliver GRCA volunteer activities to enable public participation in GRCA environmental activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geospatial data
Environmental education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver outdoor education sessions: school classes, day-camp program (under review), community groups, private groups. 	

Programs and Services	Description	Program Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate five outdoor education centres: Apps Mill, Laurel Creek, Shades Mills, Guelph Lake, Taquanyah 	
Property rentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lease of about 750 cottage lots at Belwood Lake and Conestogo Lake. Not applicable. Lease agricultural lands. Lease 8 residential units. Over 50 miscellaneous commercial agreements for use of GRCA lands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lease rates based on current market values
Hydro production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate hydro revenue from turbines at four dams (Shand, Conestogo, Guelph, and Drimmie). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River level and flow monitoring
Conservation Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate 11 active Conservation Areas (8 camping and 3 day-use only). Operate Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area Offer hunting on certain designated GRCA Lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Areas Strategy Property-specific management plans and master plans, including those for Laurel Creek Conservation Area, Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area



April 26, 2024

Address

Dear Mayor/Chief and Council,

Re: Grand River Conservation Authority's Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy – Consultation Period

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) manages water and other natural resources on behalf of 38 municipalities and about one million residents of the Grand River watershed. The GRCA is a partnership of watershed municipalities and provides an avenue to work together, addressing environmental issues and opportunities that serve to benefit the entire Grand River watershed.

Under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, each Conservation Authority in Ontario is required to prepare a Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy (Strategy). The goal of the Strategy is to ensure that the GRCA's programs and services respond to watershed issues and reflect the organization's mandate under the *Conservation Authorities Act* and municipal Memorandums of Understanding for programs and services.

The GRCA has prepared a draft Strategy and is inviting municipalities, the Six Nations of the Grand River, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and the public to review and comment on the Strategy.

The draft Strategy is available on the GRCA's website ([LINK](#)) and comments may be submitted until June 7, 2024. A public information session on the draft Strategy will be held by webinar in May and will be advertised on the GRCA's website and social media. Presentations to councils are available upon request.

Inquiries regarding the Strategy can be directed to Janet Ivey, Manager of Water Resources at Email: jivey@grandriver.ca or Tel: 519-621-2763 ext. 2128.

Yours very truly,

Chris White, Chair

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-02-24-42

Date: April 24, 2024

To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority

Subject: Current Watershed Conditions as of April 16, 2024

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-04-24-42 – Current Watershed Conditions as of April 16, 2024 be received as information.

Summary:

Precipitation in March was above average with more recorded in the first half of the month. The warm trend continued into mid-April with average temperatures around 3 degrees above the long-term average. From mid-March into early April, precipitation was mostly rain. There is no snow present throughout the watershed. Reservoirs are at their normal operating levels for this time of year. Downstream low flow targets are consistently being met.

As of April 16, 3-month indicators for precipitation are showing above average conditions throughout the watershed; precipitation in March was above average.

Lake Erie continues to be above the long-term average. Levels are close to the levels in April 2021 and 2022 and approximately 6 centimeters below the levels in April 2023. The long-term forecast over the next three months is for above normal temperatures and near normal precipitation.

Report:

Precipitation

Precipitation up to April 16 ranged from 136 to 217 percent of the long-term average for half of April at climate stations across the watershed, as shown in Table 1. To date, most precipitation in April has fallen as rain, rather than snow.

Trends in precipitation, as presented in Table 2, show that during the past 3 months, the watershed has experienced wetter than normal conditions on average, with precipitation levels ranging from around 102 percent at the Laurel climate station to 133 percent at the Shand climate station with an overall average of around 120 percent. Over longer periods, the precipitation levels are around normal long-term averages. A visual representation of these trends for the Shand climate station is provided in Figure 1.

A snow survey was completed on April 2 and no snow was present at any of the sites. As of April 16, there is no snow present throughout the watershed.

Table 1: Current monthly precipitation for climate stations across the watershed up to April 16, 2024, including the long-term average precipitation for half of April.

Climate Station	Current Month Precipitation (mm)	Long Term Average Precipitation (mm)	Percentage of Long-Term Average (%)
Shand	70.2	38.9	180%
Conestogo	64.9	39.7	163%

Climate Station	Current Month Precipitation (mm)	Long Term Average Precipitation (mm)	Percentage of Long-Term Average (%)
Guelph	72.2	37.7	191%
Luther	84.5	39.0	217%
Woolwich	53.2	32.7	163%
Laurel	55.3	39.4	140%
Shades	60.5	39.2	154%
Brantford	44.9	33.1	136%

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	158%	133%	108%	107%	104%
Conestogo	172%	124%	99%	105%	101%
Guelph	134%	126%	100%	105%	103%
Luther	133%	127%	100%	107%	108%
Woolwich	120%	111%	98%	100%	104%
Laurel	124%	102%	94%	94%	93%
Shades	112%	115%	99%	111%	106%
Brantford	90%	125%	107%	104%	105%

Air Temperatures

March was warm with temperatures around 3 degrees Celsius higher than the long-term average. At the Shand Dam climate station, daily maximum temperatures exceeded 0 degrees Celsius for 25 days during the month of March and daily averages ranged between -7.8 to +11.0 degrees Celsius with an average daily temperature of 1.7 degrees Celsius.

The average temperature at the Shand Dam climate station over the first 16 days of April was 6.6 degrees Celsius which is over 3 degrees warmer than the long-term average for the first half of the month of April.

A visual representation of these trends for the Shand climate station is provided in Figure 2.

Lake Erie Water Levels

During March, the average lake level was approximately 0.36 meters above the long-term average. Levels increased at the beginning of April and are approximately 0.40 meters above the long-term average. The forecast for Lake Erie is for lake levels to stabilize before trending down following the normal decline into early summer. Figure 3 shows the range of water levels expected over the next six months as well as the observed water levels over the last four years.

Reservoir Conditions

Reservoirs will continue to be used to manage flows during precipitation events. Reservoirs were used to capture runoff from precipitation in late March and early April and are at their normal operating levels for this time of year. There is 13 percent of available storage at both Shand and Conestogo. Year to date reservoir levels and operating rule curves are shown in

Figures 4 and 5 for the four largest reservoirs. Discharges are normal and all downstream flow targets are being met.

Low Water Response

The watershed remains in normal condition. Precipitation and streamflow data will continue to be monitored along with groundwater level data.

Groundwater

Long Range Forecast Groundwater levels in several of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network and Grand River Conservation Authority monitoring wells across the watershed were analyzed to the end of March and are shown in Figure 6.

After low monitored groundwater levels last year, most sites have recovered to their normal levels following periods of above normal precipitation. There are a few overburden wells around the central portion of the watershed that are still below their normal levels.

Long Range Forecast

Environment and Climate Change Canada is forecasting above normal temperatures and normal precipitation for the watershed over the 3 months of April, May, and June.

Flood Preparedness and Flood Centre Activities

The Upper Drayton gauge station located on the Conestogo River at Wellington Road 7 was decommissioned to accommodate a bridge replacement. All level monitoring equipment was removed from the station on April 4, 2024. Environment and Climate Change Canada installed a temporary station at the 12 Line bridge crossing downstream and GRCA is collecting the data. A rating curve is under development.

During the month of March, the GRCA flood operations centre issued one flood message, a watershed conditions statement on Friday, March 8, when there was 20 to 40 millimeters of rain in the forecast for the upcoming weekend.

The flood operations centre issued two flood messages in the first half of April. A watershed conditions statement was issued on April 1 when a weather system forecast to bring 40 to 50 millimeters of rain to the watershed for April 2 to 3. Another watershed conditions statement was issued on April 10 when there was 40 to 50 millimeters of rain in the forecast for April 11 to 12.

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

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Figure 1: Shand Dam Monthly Precipitation 2020 to April 16, 2024

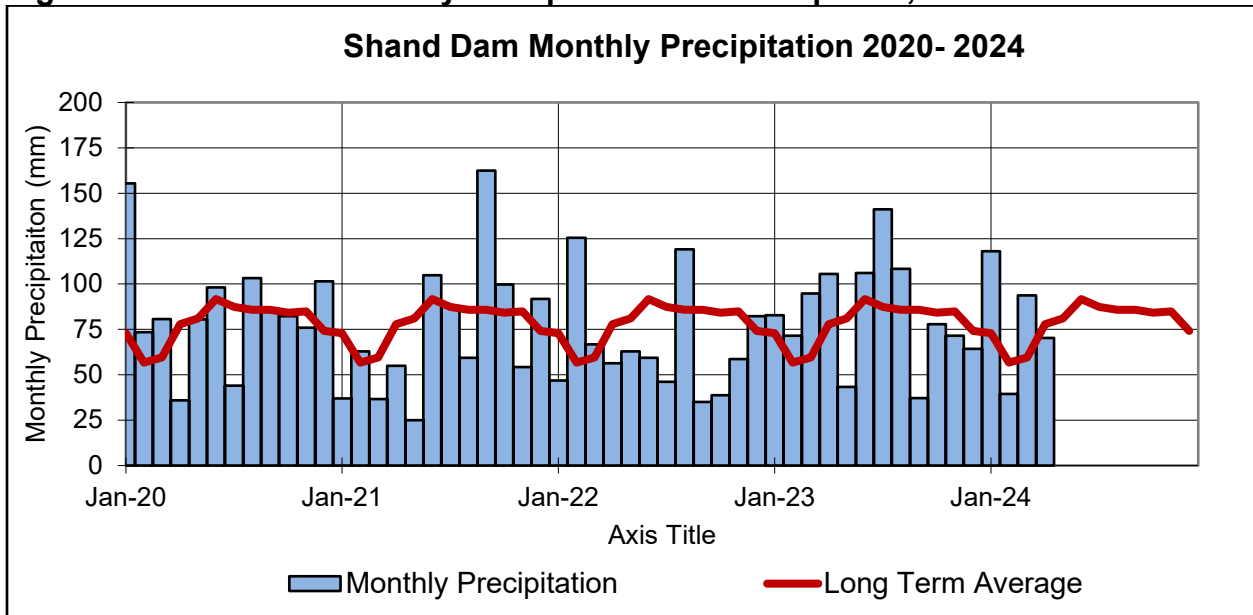


Figure 2: Monthly Average Air Temperatures at Shand Dam from 2020 to March 16, 2024

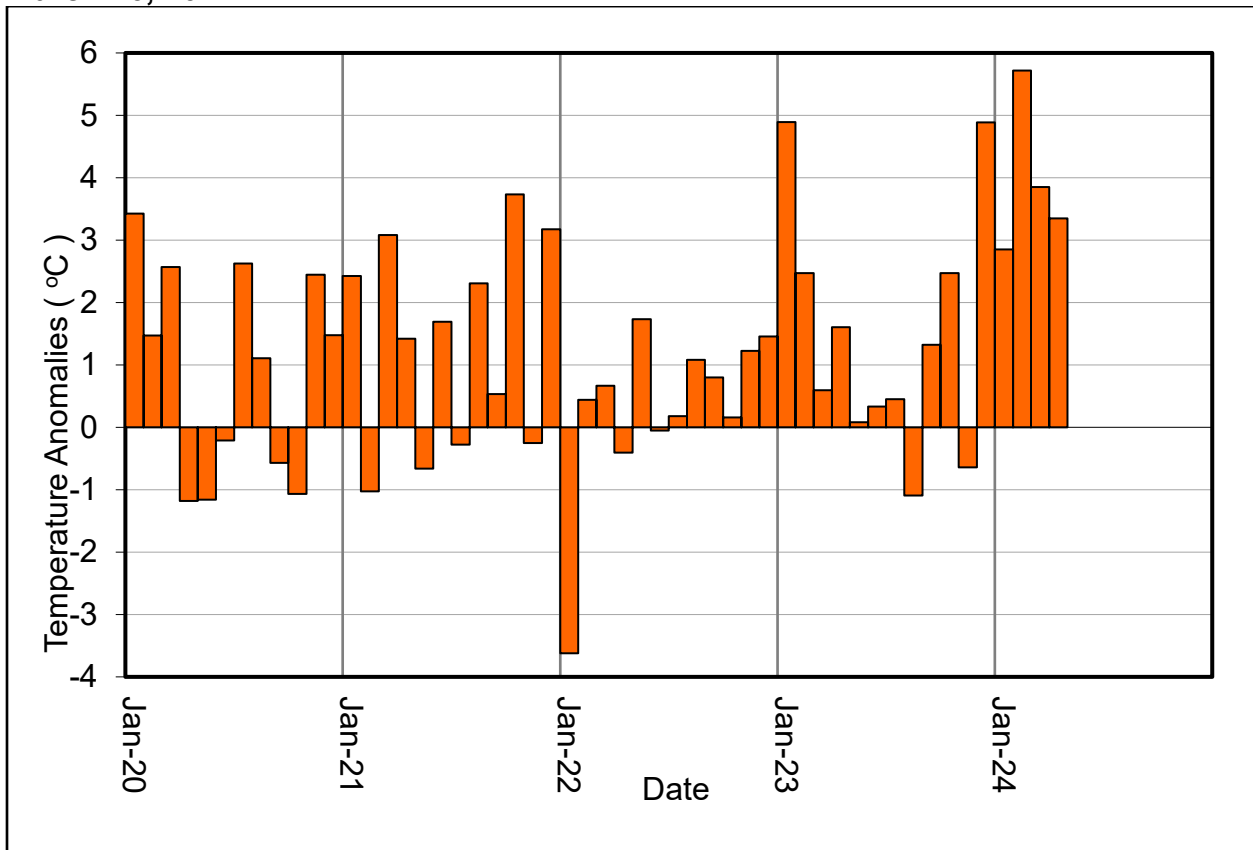


Figure 3: Water levels for Lake Erie at Port Colborne

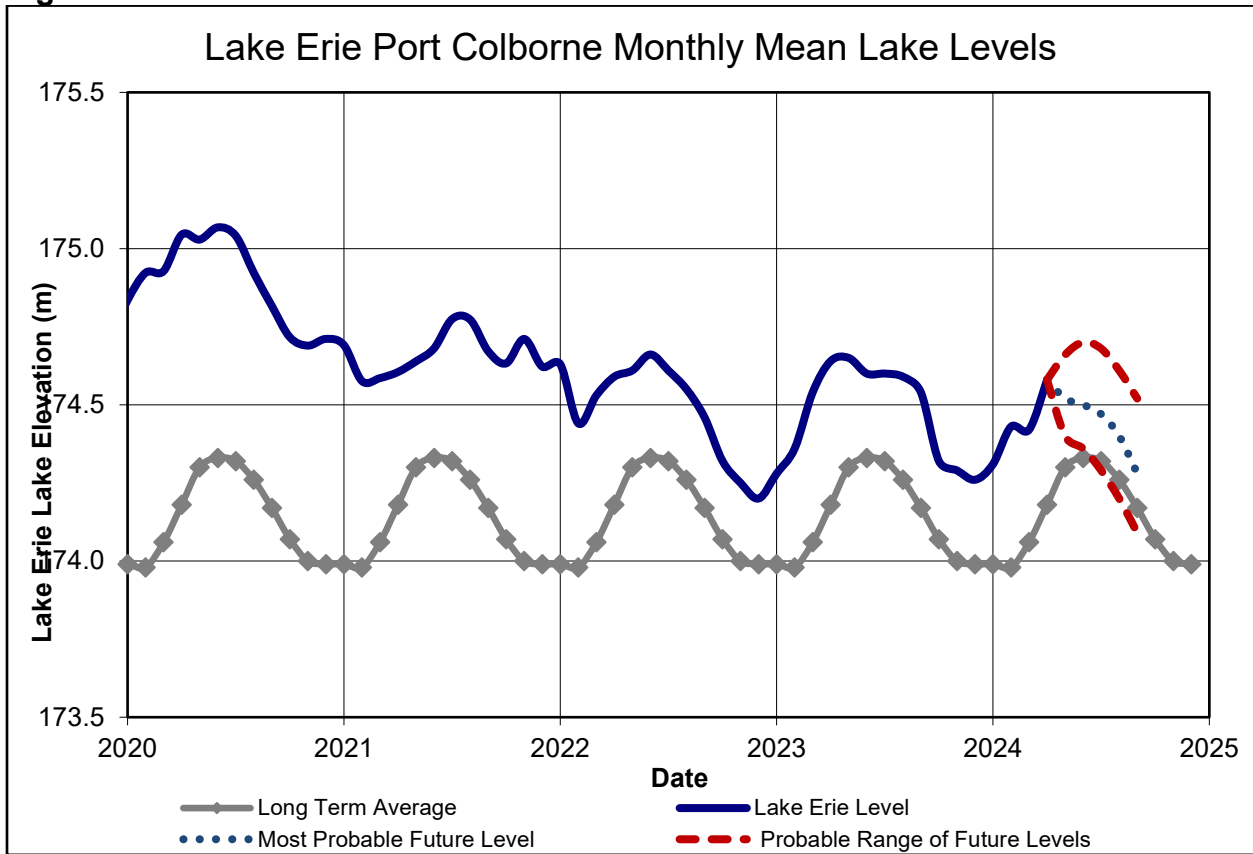


Figure 4: Shand and Conestogo Reservoir Elevation Plots for 2024

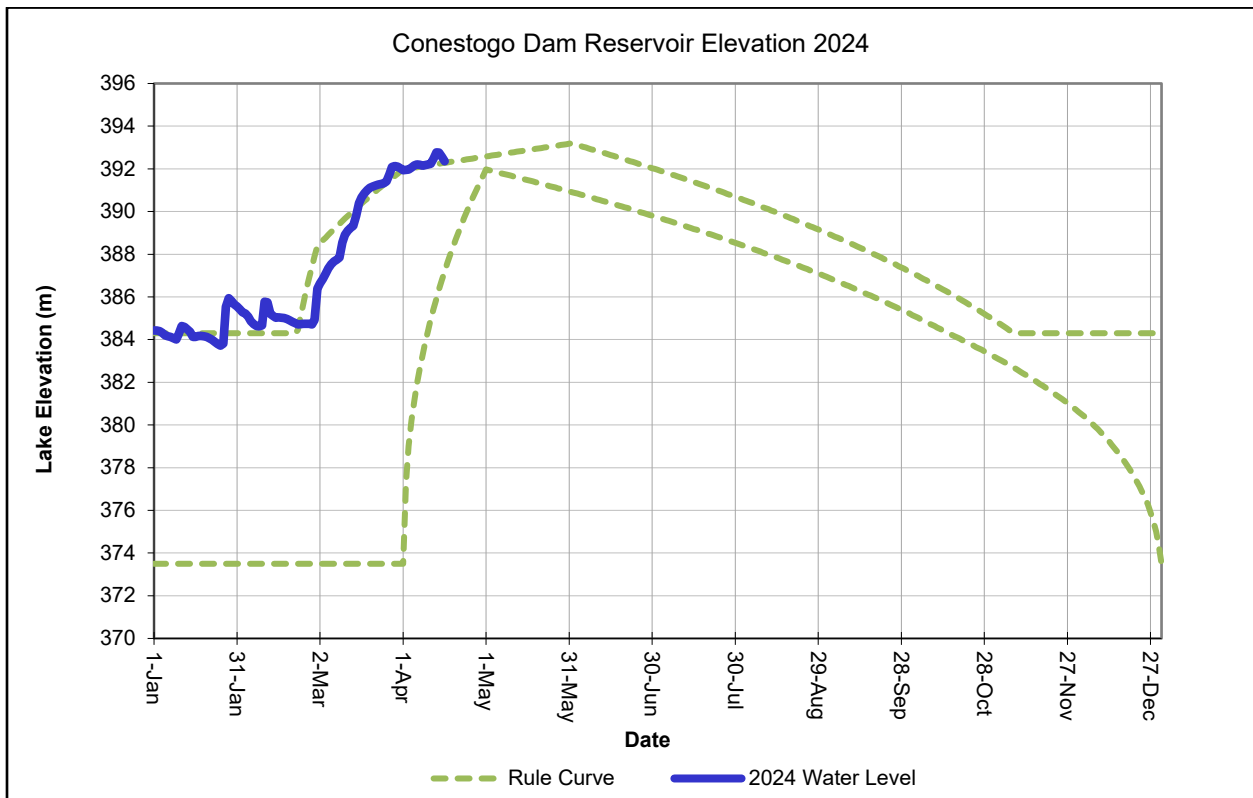
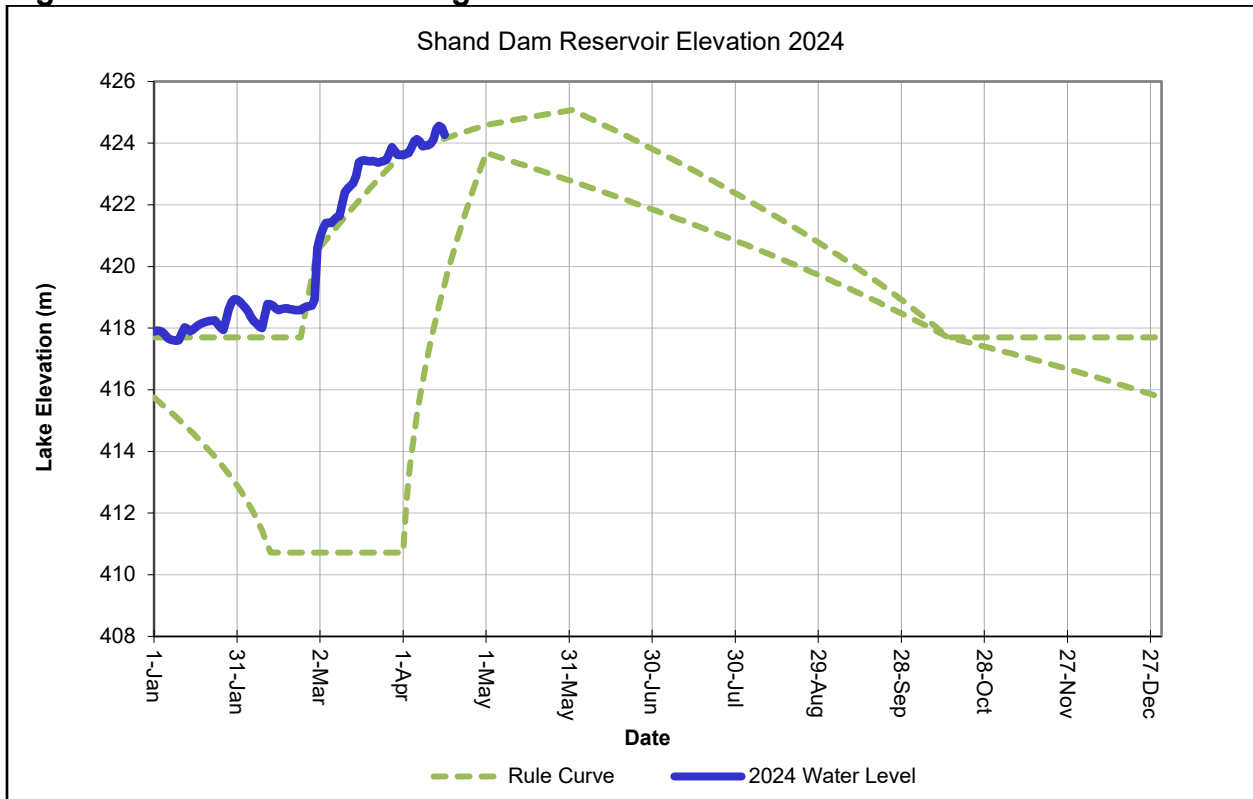


Figure 5: Guelph and Luther Reservoir Elevation Charts for 2024

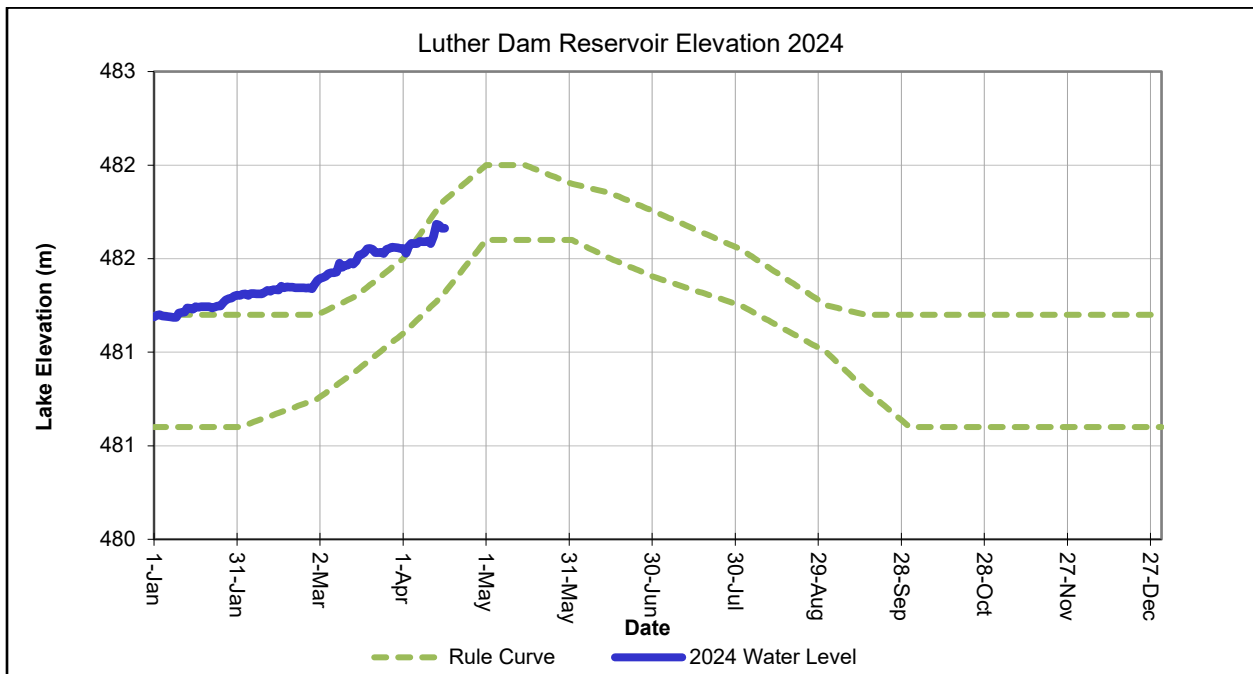
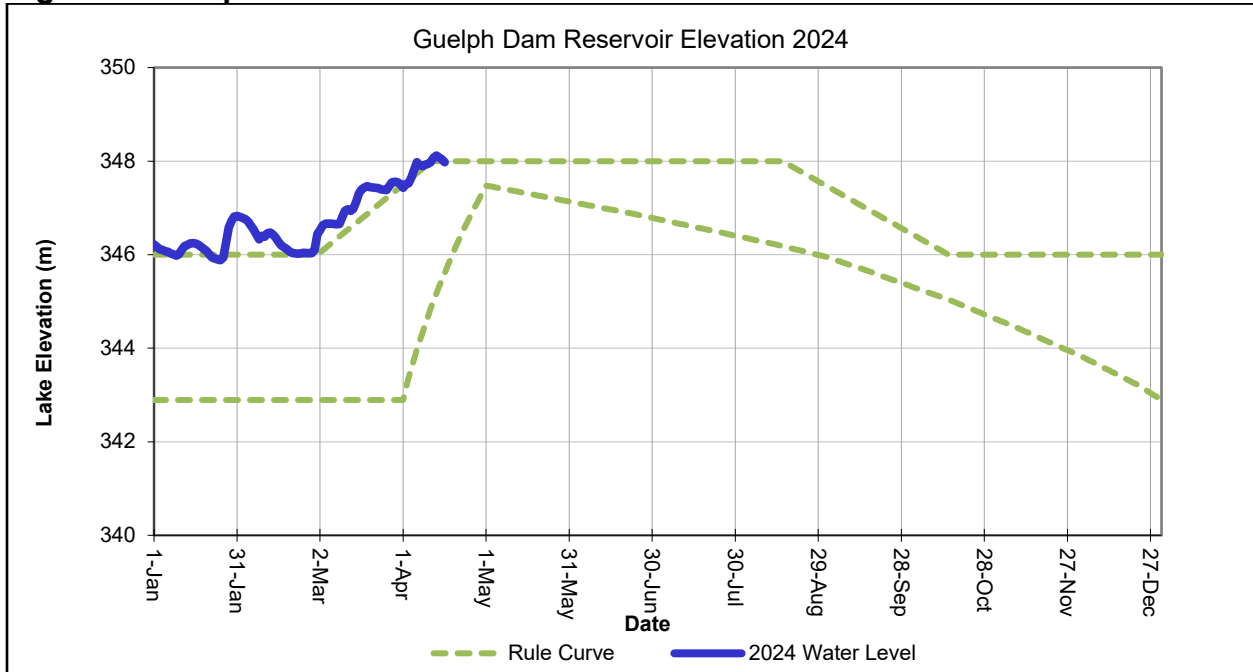


Figure 6: Groundwater conditions at GRCA monitored groundwater wells March 2024

