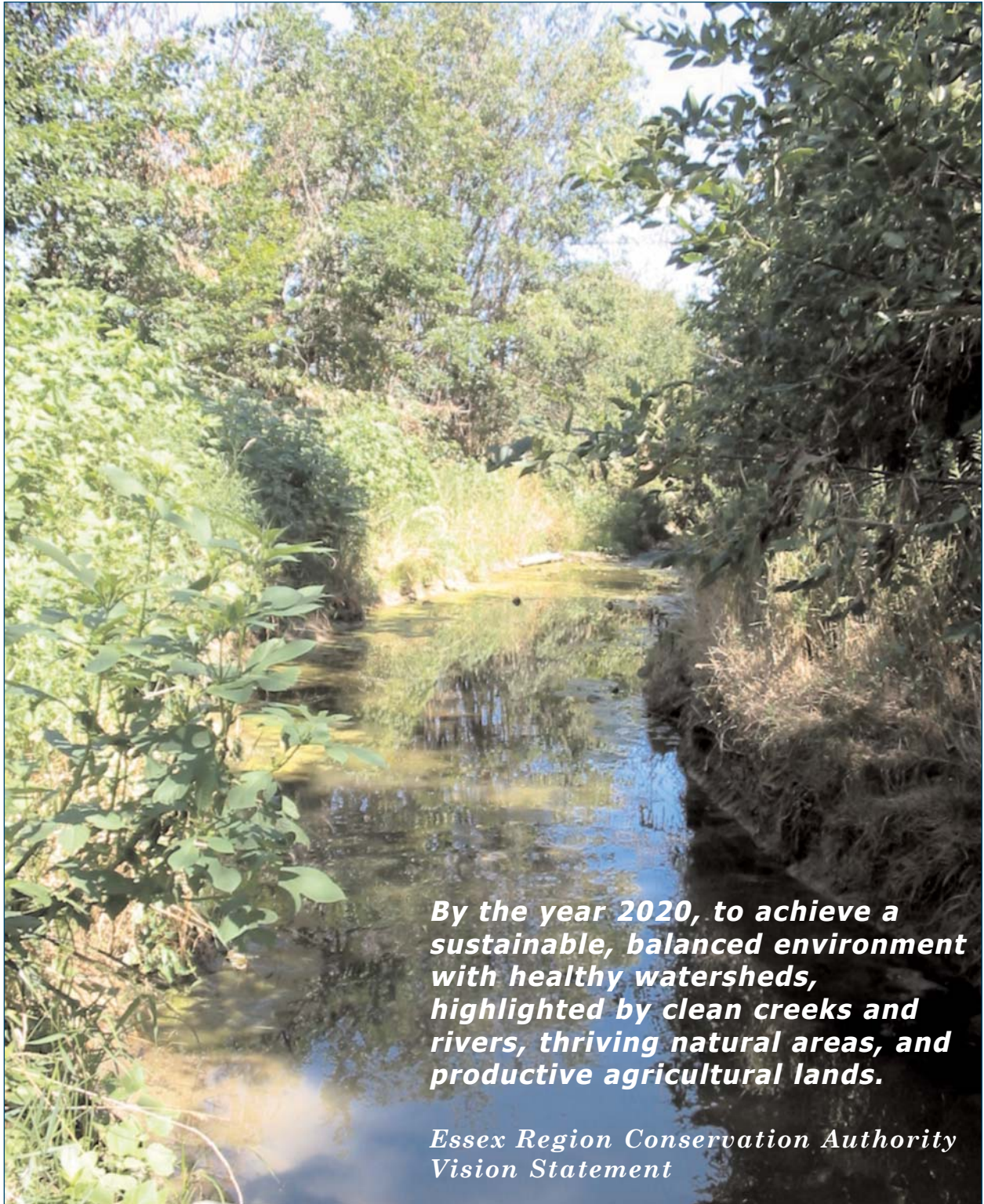




2008 Business Plan



**Essex Region
Conservation
Authority**



By the year 2020, to achieve a sustainable, balanced environment with healthy watersheds, highlighted by clean creeks and rivers, thriving natural areas, and productive agricultural lands.

*Essex Region Conservation Authority
Vision Statement*

Board of Directors (2008)

Our Mission - To provide locally based leadership in creating a sustainable environment for the residents of the Essex Region.

Town of Amherstburg

Rick Fryer
Anthony Leardi,
Vice Chair

Town of Essex

Morley Bowman
Ron Rogers

Town of Kingsville

Christopher Lewis
Tamara Stomp

Town of Lakeshore

Al Fazio
Charles McLean

Town of LaSalle

Sue Desjarlais
Ray Renaud

Municipality of Leamington

Rick Atkin
Bill Derbyshire

Township of Pelee

Darlene Wiper

Town of Tecumseh

Joe Bachetti
Tom Burton

City of Windsor

David Brister, Chair
Jo-Anne Gignac
Percy Hatfield
Fulvio Valentinis

General Manager/

Secretary-Treasurer

Ken Schmidt

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For more information about the Essex Region Conservation Authority,
visit our website at www.erca.org



message from the chair and general manager



Each year, the Essex Region Conservation Authority identifies the projects and programs that will be undertaken in working toward creating a future of sustainability for the Essex Region. These initiatives are based upon ERCA's top five strategic priorities: protecting and improving water, protecting and enhancing biodiversity, protecting people and property from flooding and erosion, expanding communication and education, and providing nature based recreational opportunities. The work that ERCA does throughout the year is imperative in this regard.

In addition to a compromised environment, currently, the Essex Region is facing difficult economic times. Dr. Richard Florida, renowned economic guru, has urged our community to look to research and development as the keys to our economic future. He has further advised that creative people are the capital we need to succeed, and that green spaces and a cleaner, healthier environment are of importance to attracting these individuals.

But even more importantly, we must regard a future of sustainability as fundamental to our future, and to the future of our children and grandchildren. A clean and healthy water supply, adequate green spaces, trails and

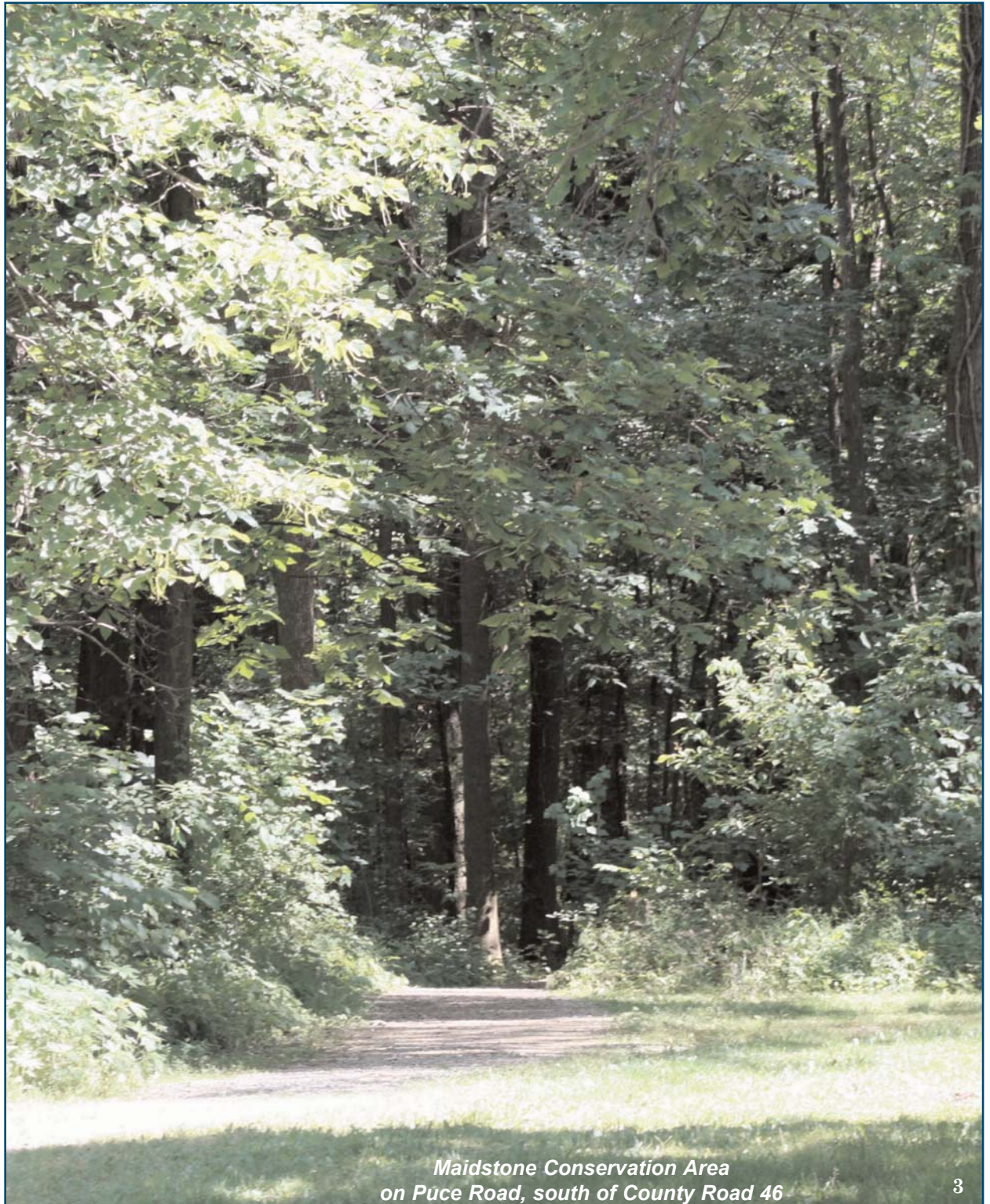
other natural areas for recreating are critical to creating a place where people want to live and one in which companies want to invest. The work done by the Essex Region Conservation Authority strives every day toward creating this ideal place.

At the end of the year, we will provide our annual report which measures our success over the previous year - a report card identifying how well we performed in meeting these objectives that we have set for ourselves. We welcome your comments and questions at any time. After all, it is only by working together as a community and collaborating as a region that we will be successful in achieving our vision of a sustainable, balanced environment with healthy watersheds, highlighted by clean creeks and rivers, thriving natural areas, and productive agricultural lands.

Sincerely,

Dave Brister
(2008) Chair

Ken Schmidt
General Manager/
Secretary-Treasurer



*Maidstone Conservation Area
on Puce Road, south of County Road 46*

protect & improve water quality

A clean and healthy water source is paramount to a healthy community. Water is our most precious natural resource, but unfortunately, one that is too easily taken for granted. It is only by properly managing the human impacts on our land that we will ever be able to ensure a clean and healthy water source: for now, and for future generations. ERCA's top strategic priority is the protection and restoration of our water resources.

Cost

Source Water Protection Planning will continue, including various technical studies to help identify potential vulnerable areas, threats, and other issues. The recently appointed multi-sector Source Protection Committee will actively guide and participate in the process, including the preparation of a detailed Terms of Reference in 2008. As is the case with Conservation Authorities throughout the province, in accordance with the new Clean Water Act, these activities are part of a multi-year process leading to comprehensive plans in 2012 to ensure the protection of the sources of water supplies.

\$1.6 Million

Partners: Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Natural Resources, Municipalities, numerous other stakeholders

Clean Water~Green Spaces will provide grants to landowners for projects that improve water quality and reduce soil erosion. Eligible projects include buffer strips, tree plantings, rock chutes, well capping and septic system upgrades. Approximately 70 projects will be completed in 2008 throughout the region.

\$675,000



Partners: Environment Canada, Province of Ontario, Landowners

Support Agricultural Organizations such as the Soil and Crop Improvement Association and the Essex Conservation Club. Farm stewardship provides the single biggest opportunity to reduce non-point source impacts on local water quality and by providing Secretary/Treasurer and technical support services to these organizations ongoing farm improvements will continue.

\$8,000

Partners: Essex Soil and Crop Improvement Association, Essex Conservation Club

Surface Water Quality Monitoring will continue at 38 ERCA stations and 8 Provincial stations across the region. Water quality data will be analyzed for trends, used to focus remediation actions, and will be integral to the preparation of Source Water Protection Plans.

\$28,000

Partners: Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of the Environment

Ground Water Quality Monitoring will continue at 9 monitoring stations operated by ERCA. These are part of the province-wide groundwater monitoring networks, and technical information regarding water level trends and water quality will be used for the preparation of Source Water Protection Plans.

\$12,000

Partners: Ministry of the Environment

Geographic Information Systems Precision Farming partnership will continue to assist with environmentally sound, cost-effective farming practices, on a fee-for-service basis.

Partners: Settrington Fertilizers

\$8,000

Upper Canard River Low Flow Augmentation Project, previously constructed by ERCA will be upgraded to improve the ability of this water storage reservoir to provide base flows in the Canard River during drought conditions.

Partners: Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment Canada, Private landowners

\$50,000



Protecting and improving water is one of of ERCA's top strategic priorities. This is accomplished through a variety of programs and initiatives in partnership with our partner municipalities and landowners across the region.

protect natural areas & enhance biodiversity

Land uses are the most critical factor affecting watershed health. Habitat in the Essex Region, while among the most unique in all of Canada, has become fragmented and degraded over the past two centuries. The United Nations has stated that for any region to be healthy and sustainable, it must consist of 12% natural areas coverage. In the Essex Region, merely 7.5% of our land base remains in a natural state. While this is an increase of 1.2% in about the past decade, we must be diligent to protect the natural areas that remain, and restore habitat in a strategic manner in order to achieve a state of sustainability for the future of this region.

Habitat Restoration projects will be completed at over 50 sites through our **Clean Water~Green Spaces Program** on private and public properties. A target of 200 acres throughout the region has been established for 2008. Different habitat types will be restored, focusing primarily on forest habitat. Prairie and wetland habitats will be pursued as opportunities arise. Projects will utilize a diversity of native Carolinian trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants.

\$631,000



Partners: Environment Canada, Province of Ontario, Municipalities, Landowners

Tree Planting activities at over one hundred privately owned sites will be completed through our spring and fall tree planting program. Over 200,000 seedling and large stock trees will be distributed or planted throughout the region to increase local forest cover. Landowner assistance will also be provided through ERCA's **Clean Water~Green Spaces** program at several sites. Tree and shrub seeds will be locally collected through our

\$445,000



Seed Collection Program for propagation into seedlings by our commercial growers to enhance the survival and vigour of seedlings used in our program in the coming years.

Partners: Landowners, Province of Ontario

Plan Review will continue to involve substantial input into new Official Plans, Environmental Assessment Studies, all Planning Applications, drainage and development proposals; including 'one window permits' for construction in or near Wetlands and Waterways to ensure protection of significant natural areas and habitats.

\$120,000

Partners: Member Municipalities, Federal Department of Fisheries & Oceans, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Landowners

Friends of Watersheds will continue with six established groups around the region. A diversity of project types will be implemented including tree plantings, stream cleanups, and symposia/educational events. A particular emphasis will be placed on engaging school aged children in partnership with school boards. Both students and adults will be involved in implementation activities.

\$122,000

Partners: Environment Canada, Point Pelee National Park, Corporate sponsors, Landowners and many others

The Essex-Erie Aquatic Species At Risk Recovery Strategy will be implemented focusing on restoration of habitat for rare fish in priority areas. This work will be undertaken in partnership with several jurisdictions in the Lake Erie watershed where these rare fish are known to occur.

\$90,000

Partners: Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada, Point Pelee National Park, Ministry of Natural Resources, University of Windsor, Landowners, and others

A Big Creek Watershed Plan will be initiated, subject to funding. The plan will ultimately guide regulatory and voluntary decisions in the Big Creek watershed to benefit both the natural environment and residents' quality of life.

\$100,000

Partners: Town of Amherstburg, Province of Ontario, local landowners and others

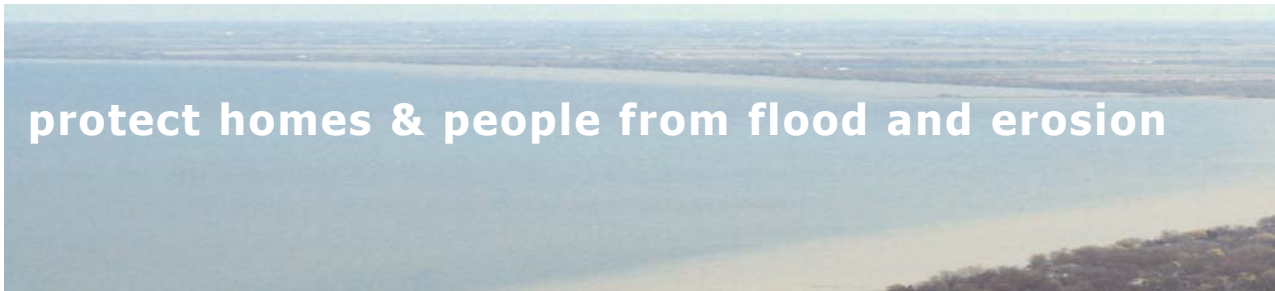
Clean Water~Green Spaces will allow ERCA, in partnership with member municipalities, to continue to protect significant natural areas such as the Spring Garden Complex, areas of the Canard River Watershed, Lypps Beach and St. Clair College Prairie.

\$4.1 Million

Partners: Municipalities, Environment Canada, Province of Ontario, Landowners and other partners

Restoration activities such as tree planting in strategic locations, and in partnership with private landowners, are key to creating a future of sustainability.





protect homes & people from flood and erosion

Protecting people and property from the dangers of flooding and erosion is one of the foundations upon which Conservation Authorities were established. To this day, it continues to be one of our core priorities. Ensuring that new development occurs in a sustainable manner also helps to protect the significant natural features of the region.

Cost

Regulations & Development Reviews will continue to provide substantial input into land use planning and development applications, including one window permitting services for proposed works along shorelines, waterways and flood plains, to ensure protection against flooding and erosion, to prevent adverse impacts such as increased downstream flows, interference with natural coastal processes, and others. This will also assist with the protection of natural areas and habitat as described previously. As well, **Plan Review**, identified as a means of protecting natural areas and enhancing biodiversity, is critically important to protecting people and properties from natural hazards. All plans are comprehensively reviewed to ensure the protection of property and natural areas.

\$380,277

Partners: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Federal Department of Fisheries & Oceans, Member Municipalities, Landowners

Comprehensive Flood / Erosion Control Program will continue, including operation of Flood Forecasting and Warning Systems; ice management (if necessary); and inspection and maintenance of major Flood / Erosion Control Structures.

\$189,000

Partners: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Member Municipalities, landowners

Geographic Information Systems will continue to be enhanced including further development of "web based" services and the development of additional GIS "layers" and databases. Partnerships and funding sources will continue to be pursued to further interact with municipalities' systems.

\$67,000

Partners: County of Essex, other municipalities, Provincial Ministry of Natural Resources

The Colchester to Southeast Shoal Littoral Cell Study assesses historical shoreline changes as a result of development and identifies the impact of development on the sediment budget and nearshore littoral movement. The findings of this study will be integrated with the recommendations of the Sustainable Management Strategy for Southeast Leamington. This study commenced in 2007, and will be completed in 2008.

\$23,000

Partners: Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Member Municipalities



The Leamington Road 1 Dyke Stability Study will assess the current stability of the Dyke which was damaged in the 2004 flood. This assessment will identify the scope of work required to bring this structure back to a stable configuration, provide protection to acceptable standards, and respond to recommendations of the Sustainable Management Strategy for Southeast Leamington.

\$50,000

Partners: MNR, Municipality of Leamington

Marentette Dyke Protection-Environmental Assessment and Design responds to recommendations of the Sustainable Management Strategy for Southeast Leamington.

\$370,000

Partners: Environment Canada, MNR, Municipality of Leamington

Lakeview Park Beach Nourishment Project will provide substantial enhancements to flood and erosion control works along the lower reaches of the Belle River, and along the shoreline of Lake St. Clair, to alleviate flooding while also improving fish habitat.

\$60,000

Partners: Towns of Lakeshore and Kingsville, Ministry of Natural Resources

Belle River Causeway Erosion Protection is a project to repair and replace erosion protection walls along a causeway which connects an inhabited island in the Belle River to the mainland. The original shore protection was constructed in the 80s. The causeway is the main access to the island and contains municipal infrastructure.

\$110,000

Partners: MNR, Town of Lakeshore

Upper Little River Watershed Stormwater Management Plans will be completed for multi-purpose facilities to address flood control and drainage for the City of Windsor Annexed Lands and portions of the Town of Tecumseh while improving water quality and habitat, and providing recreational features such as trails.

\$22,000

Partners: City of Windsor, Town of Tecumseh, Ontario Ministry of Environment

\$150,000

Other Projects throughout the region are still being considered as funding opportunities are confirmed. These include dyke maintenance and further beach nourishment at Hillman Marsh, Lakeview Park Shoreline Protection works, and others.

Partners: Ontario Ministry of Environment, Town of Lakeshore, Municipality of Leamington, Ducks Unlimited.



Education and communication are critically important to engaging residents in environmentally sustainable behaviours and drawing attention to conservation issues and initiatives. ERCA also recognizes that the students of today are the environmental stewards of tomorrow, and educates young people about the importance of conserving their environment and protecting their heritage.

Cost

Public Education and Outreach includes annual reporting, media strategies, print communications, enhancing our website, mobilizing community groups, creating education campaigns, producing videos and many other initiatives to help communicate with regional residents about environmental issues, and their impact on human health in our community.

\$91,000

Partners: Municipalities, Province of Ontario, Corporations and Businesses

Conservation Education & Heritage Field Studies are curriculum based, hands-on learning opportunities. In 2008, more than 10,000 students will learn about the importance of protecting our environment and preserving our heritage.

\$59,000

Partners: Greater Essex County District School Board, Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, CAW, others

Special Events are held at Conservation Areas and other venues across the region to engage residents in natural experiences and environmentally sustainable behaviours. Events like Sunoco Earth Day, an Urban Conservation Challenge and others provide important opportunities for residents to learn more about the environmental issues in our region, and to take action towards achieving a sustainable future.

\$43,000

The Essex County Demonstration Farm will be maintained to highlight current agricultural techniques, tools and products that enhance the linkage between farming and the environment.

\$23,000

Partners: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Local Farmers and Agribusinesses



Conservation Education helps young people learn more about the environment we all share, and raises an environmental consciousness at a young age, to hopefully create lifelong stewards of our natural environment.



provide nature-based recreational opportunities

Providing natural areas in which residents can lead physically active lifestyles is one of the pillars of a healthy community. ERCA owns and manages 21 conservation areas across the region totalling 3,500 acres of natural spaces and over 100 kilometres of trails. Recreating in outdoor venues has proven spiritual, physical and mental health benefits, and has been shown to reduce the risk of some serious health challenges. Moreover, natural areas contribute to creating a positive image for our community, helping to make it a place of choice where people want to live and companies want to invest.

Cost

Essex to Amherstburg Trail Development - Trail development for this project began in 2007 with the construction of a paved trail in the Town of Essex in partnership with the Town of Essex, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Essex Rotary Club. The Conservation Authority is seeking funding and working with its partners to continue building this trail on the south side of Highway #3.

\$150,000

Partners: Town of Essex, Town of Amherstburg, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Essex Rotary Club.

Holiday Beach Campground Upgrades - This important birding and recreational centre will be undergoing construction in 2008 once funding is approved. 35 of our existing campsites will be having electricity and drinking water installed this year in addition to typical campsite amenities such as fire pits and new picnic tables.

\$150,000

Partners: Town of Amherstburg, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Kathleen-Mary and Walter Barron Family Foundation

Ruscom Shores Pavilion Development - In 2008, the Conservation Authority will be constructing a 20ft x 20ft picnic pavilion to accommodate families and groups at this site. A pavilion will further enhance the visitor amenities at this site and will most likely lead to an increase in use.

\$12,000

Partners: Town of Lakeshore, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

McAuliffe Woods Conservation Area - Trail Development

\$80,000

McAuliffe Woods Conservation Area is a 23 acre forest with wood chipped trails that were built in the 1980s. The Town of Tecumseh and the Conservation Authority are working together to make improvements to this trail system and to plan for future links from McAuliffe Woods to neighboring communities.

Partners: Town of Tecumseh, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Landfill Site No. 2 - Trail Development - The Essex Windsor Solid Waste Authority (EWSWA) and the Conservation Authority are discussing proposed habitat enhancements, trails and a new parking lot that links with the Chrysler Canada Greenway. Discussions are ongoing with EWSWA regarding potential funding sources.

\$200,000

Partners: Town of Leamington, Town of Kingsville, Essex Windsor Solid Waste Authority, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

Stone Rd. Alvar Endangered Species Management - The Stone Road Alvar will be given additional attention in 2008 in order to enhance the habitat of the threatened Fox Snake and Endangered Blue Racer Snake. In cooperation with the Species at Risk recovery team, the Conservation Authority will be cutting back shrubs that have encroached onto the rare Alvar habitat that exists on Pelee Island- the preferred habitat of these two snake species.

\$10,000

Partners: Township of Pelee Island, EJLB Foundation, Environment Canada

Tremblay Beach Wetland Development - ERCA will work with its partners to enhance the variety of plants and animals of this wetland and test methods of controlling the invasive Phragmites plant which diminishes wetland productivity.

\$2,000

Partners - Town of Lakeshore, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Heritage Forests will continue to be expanded at Big Creek Conservation Area and at the Fred Cuda Heritage Forest at Hillman Marsh Conservation Area. This program reforests selected tracts of land while memorializing loved ones. A new aspect of this project is the Living Legacy Forest which commemorates and celebrates life events.

\$30,000

Partners - Reid, Janisse, Marcotte, Melady, Sutton and Morris Sutton Funeral Homes

Conservation Areas Operations - ERCA will continue to provide high quality recreational venues for the region to enjoy. For a full listing of ERCA's 21 Conservation Areas, please visit our website for fees, trail maps and detailed information.

\$647,000



watershed connections

Watersheds are made up of different eco-systems that interconnect and affect the quality and quantity of our drinking water sources. Our lifestyles have the biggest impact on all of our watersheds. The next time you turn on the tap, fertilize your lawn, work in the garden or wash your car, remember that everyone lives downstream in a watershed. We all need to do our part to keep our watersheds healthy and sustainable. Here is how your watershed works, and some of the ways that your Conservation Authorities are helping to keep your drinking water safe.

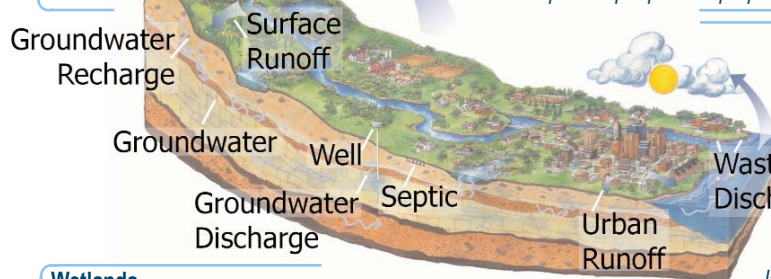
Forests

Forests moderate our climate, regulate water systems, prevent erosion, absorb carbon dioxide and provide wildlife habitat. Conservation Authorities protect, manage and restore Ontario's woodlands through tree planting and woodlot management programs.

Lakes, Rivers and Streams

In the Essex Region, almost all of our drinking water comes from surface sources such as rivers and lakes. The best way to ensure safe drinking water is not to contaminate these sources. What we do on the land is reflected in our water, and water contamination most often occurs through runoff from human activities.

Conservation Authorities monitor and manage surface water quality and quantity, as well as protect people and property from flooding and erosion.



Vegetation

The grasses, trees and shrubs that grow next to lakes, rivers and streams reduce erosion, filter out contaminants and provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

Conservation Authorities provide advice about, technical expertise to, and in the Essex Region, incentive grants for landowners to plant buffer strips along watercourses.

Wetlands

Wetlands are the 'workhorses' of our watersheds. They help protect the quality and quantity of our groundwater. They act as a natural filter for toxic substances, and provide groundwater recharge and discharge areas. This prevents soil erosion and helps to store floodwaters. Wetlands are also a source of food and habitat for many species of fish and wildlife. They cannot fulfill these important functions if we fill them in and build on them. *Conservation Authorities improve wetland habitat, protect sensitive wetland areas and provide conservation education to help increase our understanding about the importance of wetlands.*

Groundwater

Groundwater is often thought of as an underground river or lake, while actually, it only occurs this way in caves. It is usually stored in the small spaces between soil particles or in cracks in bedrock, much like water in a sponge. Groundwater is easily contaminated by surface activities, and since it moves so slowly, it takes a long time for the pollution to become evident. Because of this, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to clean up groundwater if it has been contaminated. *Conservation Authorities monitor the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies as well as promote good watershed stewardship practices to prevent contamination of groundwater sources.*

Water Treatment Systems

If you live in a more urban area, your water is treated by a water treatment system. However, since not all contaminants can be removed, and water is very expensive to treat, it just makes good sense to keep our surface water and groundwater clean at their source.

Conservation Authorities promote source protection for drinking water.

Runoff

Contaminants travel over land and paved areas such as roads and parking lots, and wash directly into surface and groundwater sources. This is especially problematic after heavy rains or during snowmelt.

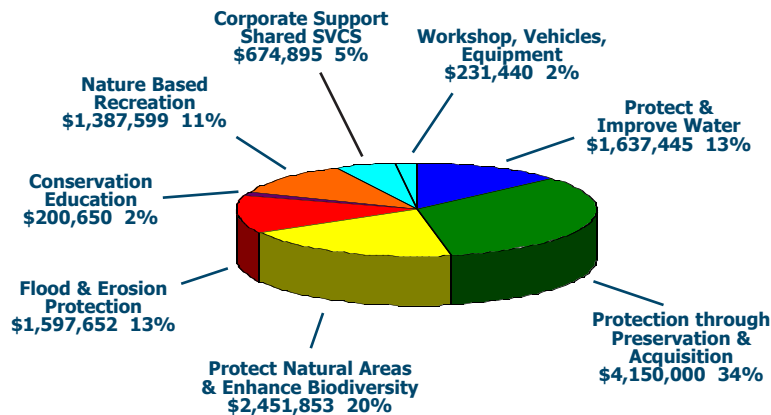
Conservation Authorities deliver watershed education programs to inform people about environmentally healthy practices.

the business of sustainability

	2008 Approved Budget	2007 Approved Budget
EXPENSES (ESTIMATED)		
PROTECT AND IMPROVE WATER QUALITY		
Source Water Protection Plans including Technical Studies	\$1,637,445	\$2,057,392
PROTECT NATURAL AREAS AND ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY		
Program Management & Development	\$89,013	\$116,316
Projects	\$1,877,973	\$1,643,786
Forestry Program	<u>\$484,867</u>	<u>\$429,904</u>
TOTAL	\$2,451,853	\$2,190,006
LAND AQUISITION	\$4,150,000	\$1,900,000
PROTECT HOMES AND FAMILIES FROM FLOODING AND EROSION		
Regulations, Planning & GIS	\$832,652	\$819,400
Remedial Capital Projects	<u>\$765,000</u>	<u>\$3,607,750</u>
TOTAL	\$1,597,652	\$4,427,150
PROVIDE CONSERVATION EDUCATION		
Public Awareness, Education	\$129,650	\$130,568
Conservation Education - School Program	\$61,000	\$61,249
Special Events	<u>\$12,000</u>	<u>\$12,000</u>
TOTAL	\$200,650	\$203,817
PROVIDE NATURE BASED RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES		
Program Management	\$158,397	\$148,497
Conservation Areas Development	\$562,388	\$886,557
Conservation Area Maintenance	\$288,507	\$301,669
Holiday Beach Conservation Area	\$200,650	\$356,650
John R. Park Homestead and Conservation Area	<u>\$177,657</u>	<u>\$167,100</u>
TOTAL	\$1,387,599	\$3,760,473
CORPORATE SERVICES		
Corporate Support & Shared Services	\$674,895	\$690,008
Central Workshop & Grounds	\$35,790	\$33,134
Vehicles and Equipment	<u>\$195,650</u>	<u>\$178,665</u>
TOTAL	\$906,335	\$901,808
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$12,331,534	\$13,540,645
REVENUES (ESTIMATED)		
Provincial Grants	\$2,908,425	\$4,695,345
Federal Grants	\$410,900	\$1,703,275
Other Grants & Donations	\$604,580	\$465,071
General Levy	\$1,262,060	\$1,294,560
Clean Water ~ Green Spaces	\$1,050,000	\$1,050,000
Municipal Funding – Special Projects	\$308,200	\$1,465,500
Corporate Recoveries	\$596,650	\$522,191
In-Kind Contributions	\$2,706,500	\$1,165,900
Fees, Admissions, Rentals	\$1,083,476	\$997,323
Fund Transfers (from previous period)	\$1,400,743	\$190,480
TOTAL REVENUES	\$12,331,534	\$13,540,645
NET DEFICIT/(SURPLUS)	0	0

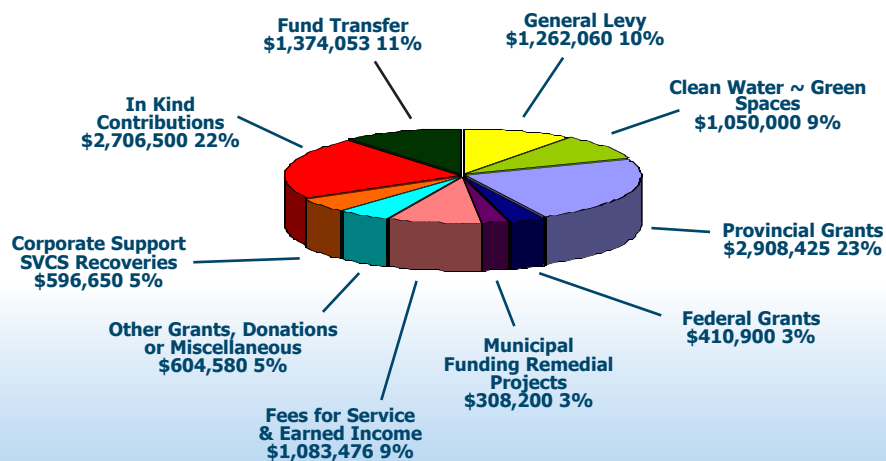
2008 financial information

Expenses - Approved Budget



Total: \$12,331,534

Revenues - Approved Budget



Total: \$12,331,534



A member of



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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