

Annual Report 2008

Kettle Creek Conservation Authority



People in Harmony with Nature

Over the recent years, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority has moved beyond implementing its core programs of flood warning, dam operations and environmental planning to pursue its broader vision of "People in Harmony with Nature". Through environmental education, stewardship initiatives and conservation areas improvements, KCCA is ensuring that the watershed community is able to realize and appreciate the beauty and value of their local natural environment.



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Conservation Authority



Education & Awareness

KCCA coordinated the St. Thomas-Elgin Children's Water Festival in May 2008 at Pinafore Park in St. Thomas. Over 3,000 grades 3-5 students attended the Festival and participated in hands-on and interactive activity stations linked to the Ontario Curriculum. The activities taught students about source water protection, stream and wetland critters, groundwater protection, and proper disposal of household hazardous waste. Ultimately, the goal of the Children's Water Festival was to motivate behavioural changes in the students and stress the importance of clean, safe water in their lives and communities.



Well Drill It: Students use a groundwater model to investigate how water and pollutants can move underground at the "Well Drill It" activity station at the Children's Water Festival.

KCCA was also involved in the coordination of the first ever Carolinian Forest Festival held at Jaffa Environmental Education Centre and Springwater Conservation Area in October 2008. This festival was modeled closely after the highly successful Children's Water Festival and taught 900 grade 6 and 7 students the importance of forest ecosystems, species at risk, forest resources and climate change.

KCCA became a partner in Trout Unlimited's Yellow Fish Road program. This program educates the public about the impact of household hazardous waste and pollution entering storm drains. Local Girl Guides were the first group to implement the program in Port Stanley – painting yellow fish next to storm drains in the village and distributing information packages to over 200 residences.

KCCA is delighted to announce the launch of their new website in early March 2009. With a hint of corporate flare, the user-friendly layout has an up to date look and offers expanded service descriptions for all programs and conservation areas. Site visitors will enjoy the ease of functionality on searching for programs or browsing the conservation areas.

The site also provides users with a more comprehensive overview of natural hazards management; natural heritage management; environmental monitoring; stewardship; forestry and tree planting; conservation areas and recreation; planning, regulations and permits; and education programs.

To learn more about Kettle Creek Conservation Authority please visit us online at www.kettlecreekconservation.on.ca

Forestry & Stewardship

Recognizing the extremely dry growing season in 2007, Ontario Power Generation funded a replanting program as part of their agreement with KCCA which allow landowners to replace trees that did not survive the difficult conditions. After touring a number of newly planted and replanted sites in the fall of 2008, OPG's Environmental Advisor Steve Hounsell said: *"This has been a very successful year on a number of fronts, including new reforestation techniques and much more favourable weather conditions. It was great meeting some of the landowners who clearly share our collective passion for reforesting critical lands."*

With the continued support of community partners, KCCA will continue to plant the current level of 100,000 trees per year. In order to achieve the 25 per cent forest cover recommended by Environment Canada, tree planting on this scale would need to continue for 100 years in the Kettle Creek watershed.

KCCA published the *"Lower Kettle Creek Community Based Watershed Strategy."* This strategy is the last in a series of three watershed reports that strives to build a partnership of community stakeholders to identify local environmental concerns and develop action plans to address these issues. These strategies form the basis for stewardship efforts in the future.



Tree Planting: Together we plant 100,000 trees per year.

Environmental Monitoring

In the spring of 2008, an unusual Riffle Beetle (*Ancyronyx variegata*) was identified in the benthic samples by Dr. Ron Griffiths. Dr. Griffiths has never collected this particular species in Ontario after 33 years of sampling. This beetle is quite distinctive in appearance and cannot be confused with other species. Finding this species in the Upper Kettle Creek subwatershed suggests that it is potentially a northern range extension, which could be evidence of climate change.



Logperch: This species was found in Lower Kettle Creek and is the host of the snuff box, a freshwater mussel.



Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle:

This species was observed sunning itself in the Lower Kettle Creek subwatershed. This turtle is threatened provincially and nationally and is listed as an aquatic species at risk.

twenty-five species found, three were invasive species: Common Carp, Goldfish and Round Goby. We hope to continue the species inventory in 2009 with special interest in locating Species at Risk due to the influx of species from Lake Erie.

As part of the fisheries data update started in 2007, KCCA staff conducted an electrofishing survey this summer. Electrofishing is an efficient capture method that is used to obtain reliable population estimates, length-weight relationships, and age and growth of most species. KCCA staff found twenty-five species in total. Of the

In 2008, all seven monitoring wells were fully equipped with level loggers, temperature sensors and dedicated pumps. Water samples were collected in the spring and fall and analyzed for nutrients, metals and bacteria.

Flood Forecasting

In 2008, the KCCA watershed experienced two significant flood events: January 9-10, 2008 and December 27-29, 2008. In January 2008, southern Ontario experienced a major winter thaw where London had some of its warmest January weather in a decade. This resulted in overbank flooding throughout the watershed and a top flow of 140 cubic meters per second in Lower Kettle Creek.

In December 2008, southern Ontario went through a cold snap and received several feet of snow. Suddenly, temperatures increased and the snowfall turned into rain—several areas in Southern Ontario were even issued thunderstorm warnings. The melting snowpack combined with between 50-70 mm of rain in some areas caused a significant amount of water to flow into the rivers and streams of the watershed resulting in another round of flooding. The stream flow monitoring gauge in the Lower Kettle Creek subwatershed recorded flows at 144 cubic meters per second.

Planning & Regulations

The importance of environmental planning to guide development decisions is strongly emphasized through KCCA's planning and regulations program. Over the past several years, KCCA has seen development growth increase upon lands containing significant natural heritage features. KCCA has upheld provincial and local standards for environmental protection through its participation in plan input and review.

The health and condition of our watershed ecosystem relies upon such features being protected from negative effects caused by proposed development of adjacent lands. Further, lands susceptible to natural hazards, such as flooding and erosion, must be identified and avoided through appropriate assessments to ensure that the protection of life and property is maintained.

In 2008, regulation and development reviews continued to provide substantial input into land use planning and development applications. As well, fifty-three (53) permits were issued under Ontario Regulation 181/06 while eight (8) Notices of Violation were issued.

Conservation Areas

Significant changes started at each of KCCA's conservation areas in 2008 as part of the five-year infrastructure plan that was developed in 2007.

This past summer, KCCA staff were busy making improvements to Dalewood Conservation Area by creating new tenting sites with a new gravel road at the bottom of the hill, south of visitors services centre; turning existing sites (sites 54-69) to 30-amp service sites; adding a new parking area near the laundromat and pool; building a workshop compound; making improvements to the indoor service alley plumbing and replacing front entrance gates. In 2009, KCCA will begin upgrading some of the existing 15-amp campsites to 30-amp.

At Lake Whittaker Conservation Area, the Lakeshore and Woodlane shower stalls were refurbished and a handicap accessible pool sidewalk was completed. The Ivan Row Trail is almost complete with the addition of 2 new boardwalks.

Our Donor List...

Thank you to the following for their financial donations to Kettle Creek Conservation Authority in 2008:

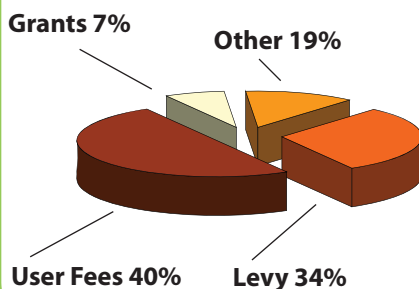
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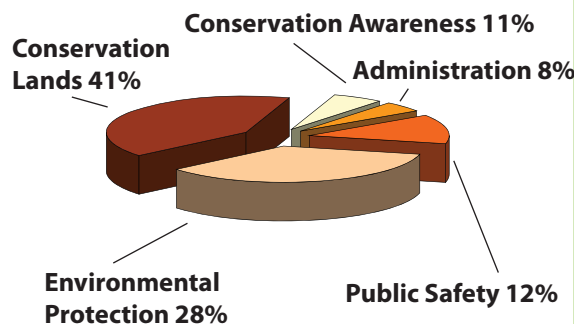
Environmental Scholarship: KCCA and CAW Local 1520 partnered in 2008 to help a student pursuing education in the environmental field. Kevin Hill, Chair of the Ford CAW Local 1520 Environmental Committee, presents a cheque for \$500 to Dana Lauzon.

2008 Financial Statements

Total Revenues: \$1,763,451



Total Expenditures: \$1,768,451



Source: Audited Financial Statements 2008



2008

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