

Annual Report 2010

Kettle Creek Conservation Authority



Climate Change

Climate change is a local issue. Whether it is intense rainfall or periods of drought, climate change influences our local watershed community through increased flooding, erosion and impacts on biodiversity. As an environmental leader in watershed management, KCCA is committed to helping the local community understand climate change, why it matters and what can be done to reduce and cope with its effects. Through its core programs and services and ongoing watershed management, KCCA contributes to communities adapting to climate change.



Education & Awareness

In cooperation with the Municipality of Central Elgin, the Elgin Area Primary Water Supply System, the City of St. Thomas and the Township of Southwold, KCCA coordinated an outreach and education program to increase public awareness of the Intake Protection Zone near Port Stanley and the importance of the Clean Water Act. The project had three main elements: an interactive display at the International Plowing Match (IPM) in St. Thomas, an in-class education program and a Spills Workshop.

The Watershed Adventure Display at the IPM was a collaborative effort between Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, Upper Thames River, Lower Thames Valley and Long

Point Region Conservation Authorities. The exhibit took people through the complete water cycle, from a raindrop falling into a lake, through the filtration process, and back out into the environment through a waste management facility.

The display was very popular and attracted more than 17,000 visitors. Due



Watershed Adventure Display: The IPM provided a venue to target a broad audience: rural landowners and urban residents.

to its success at the IPM, KCCA was invited to take the Watershed Adventure Display to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair is Canada's most prominent agricultural event attracting 300,000 people every year. This was the first time that KCCA had such province-wide exposure.

Expanding on the IPM display, staff developed an education program that was delivered to 10 classes in the St. Thomas area. Students learned that maintaining the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface water is vital for the future development of their communities.

The final component of the outreach and education program was a Spills Workshop. This workshop taught local business owners and municipal staff how to properly respond to a spill in order to protect drinking water sources and the local environment. It is hoped that the workshop will become an annual event.

Finally, KCCA's website continues to be used by the public as a source of environmental information. The total number of visits to the site was 21,578 between January 1 and December 31, 2010. The number of visits remains steady from month to month, with the most page visits occurring in July (3,245) and August (2,714). These statistics indicate that there is a high demand for the information on the KCCA website.

Forestry & Stewardship

As part of an on going contract for services with Ontario Power Generation, KCCA planted another 100,000 trees throughout the watershed. This long-term commitment keeps the Authority on track to plant the one millionth tree in Kettle Creek watershed in 2013.



"Test Plot": Doelman Farms planting site compares four different tree planting techniques.

In order to attract new tree planting sites, KCCA developed a demonstration site at the corner of Ron McNeil Line and Wellington Road at Doelman Farms. This innovative project compares four different planting techniques and features over 15 different native species of trees. With thousands of people driving by the site each day, it will help to encourage tree planting in the London and St. Thomas area. In addition, the site will provide valuable information for forestry staff to optimize tree survivability on other sites.

Planning & Regulations

In 2010 KCCA provided input into over 100 planning and development applications. Forty-four permits and two violations were issued under Ontario Regulation 181/06.

In terms of improvements to the program, staff began an internal review of KCCA's Section 28 Regulation Administrative Procedures. The review is the result of a new provincial chapter for the Conservation Authorities' Policies and Procedures Manual being introduced entitled: "Policies and Procedures for Conservation Authority Plan Review and Permitting Activities".

The objective of this new chapter is to provide clarity about the roles and responsibilities of Conservation Authorities in municipal planning and regulatory permitting processes while establishing more consistency in Conservation Authority decision-making through plan review process improvements.

Another advancement to the planning program was the acquisition of new high definition aerial photography of the entire watershed as part of the South West Ontario Orthophotography Project (SWOOP).

Environmental Monitoring



American Rubyspot: There are over 2800 known damselfly species worldwide, most in the tropics, 51 in Canada..

2010 was a year of discovery in the Kettle Creek watershed as a number of unique species were identified. Most noteworthy was the location of the Mottled Sculpin in Mill Creek, which is a cold water stream. This species of fish thrives in cold water and can be an indication that other sport fish, such as rainbow trout, may be flourishing in the stream as well.

Just as promising was the confirmed sighting of the Eastern Fox Snake in St. Thomas. This snake is protected under Ontario's Endangered Species Act, 2007. The Eastern Fox Snake population has declined in Ontario as wetlands were drained and shorelines were developed for cottages. This species is often mistaken for a rattlesnake and deliberately killed.

Other rare sightings suggest evidence of climate change. The American Rubyspot, a dragonfly that is uncommon in Canada, was recorded for the first time in the Dodd Creek subwatershed. Evidence of its survival in the watershed could be indicative of a northern range extension.

All of this information is taken into consideration as part of the Authority's preparation of the Watershed Report Card Update. The 2010 Update awarded the watershed a "C" based on surface water, groundwater, terrestrial, climate and forest conditions, up from a grade of "C-minus" in 2009. This represents a positive trend of improvement in overall watershed health.

Flood Forecasting

KCCA continues to improve the flood forecasting program to make more precise decisions on when to release safety bulletins and flood warnings. An old rain monitoring station was fully replaced and re-activated in Belmont. This station will increase the coverage of precipitation data within the Kettle Creek watershed, and the information will be used with a variety of other programs including the Flood Forecasting and Ontario Low Water Response (OLWR) Program.

Staff also completed two erosion control projects at Dalewood and Union dams. High flow events in 2009 that broke over the spillway at Dalewood dam damaged the erosion control mat and removed boulders holding the mat in place. The mat was repaired and the boulders replaced to prevent any further erosion along the downstream section of the dam.

Conservation Areas

KCCA completed significant infrastructure investment in all of the conservation areas in 2010. With financial support from the Kettle Creek Conservation Trust, new barriers were installed at the Dan Patterson Conservation Area and the parking lot was completely graded.

At Dalewood and Lake Whittaker Conservation Areas, both swimming pools were re-surfaced and wheelchair accessible pathways were installed leading to each campground's main washroom. A new utility shed at Dalewood and upgrades to Lake Whittaker's Poolside and Woodlane washrooms completed the infrastructure projects for the year.

The investment paid off with each campground seeing a marked increase in use and a healthy profit. Staff hope the introduction of on-line booking services will continue to increase interest in the campgrounds in 2011.

Administration

With a special funding grant from the Ministry of Natural Resources, KCCA and Long Point Region Conservation Authority commissioned KPMG to complete the "KCCA-LPRCA Cooperative Efficiency Study." The study evaluated options for joint program delivery and cost efficiencies.

As part of an internal efficiency review, KCCA eliminated the position of Conservation Areas Supervisor and created a Maintenance Coordinator position that is responsible for the overall maintenance of KCCA's significant properties.

Carolinian Forest Festival



Students identify components of an Old Growth Forest at the 2010 Carolinian Forest Festival.

KCCA was a partner in the Carolinian Forest Festival in October of 2010. This was the third year for the Festival, hosted by the Jaffa Environmental Education Centre and Catfish Creek Conservation Authority.

The Carolinian Forest Festival is a three day event that teaches 1,500 grade 6 and 7 students the importance of the Carolinian Life Zone, forest ecosystems, species at risk, stewardship and conservation, and climate change through hands-on, interactive activities linked to the Ontario Curriculum.

Agricultural Conservation Scholarship



Terry Carrol and Fonz Vanderbroek present a cheque for \$500 to Nathan Clarke, 2010 winner.

KCCA, Elgin County Junior Farmers Alumni, and Elgin Federation of Agriculture continue to award the Agricultural Conservation Scholarship. The scholarship fund is administered by the Kettle Creek Conservation Trust.



2010

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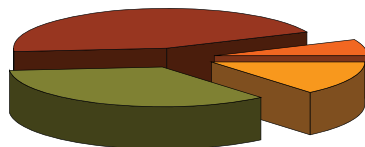
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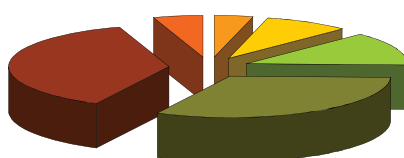
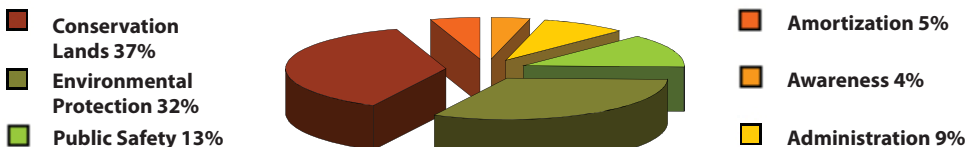
2010 Financial Statements

Source: Audited Financial Statements 2010

Total Revenues: \$1,797,448



Total Expenditures: \$1,662,969



Our Partners/Donors List...

Thank you to the following for their financial and in-kind donations to Kettle Creek Conservation Authority in 2010:

• Catfish Creek CA • C.A.W. Local 1001 • C.A.W. Local 1520 • City of London • City of St. Thomas • Conservation Ontario • County of Elgin • Elgin County Junior Farmers Alumni • Elgin Federation of Agriculture • Elgin Hiking Trail Club • Elgin Stewardship Council • Fisheries & Oceans Canada • Graham Scott Enns • Grand River CA • Hennessey Gibson Hogan • Huron Tractor, St. Thomas • Kettle Valley Pioneers • Kiwanis Club of St Thomas • Lake Erie Source Protection Region • Long Point Region CA • Lower Thames Valley CA • Middlesex Stewardship Council • Ministry of Natural Resources • Ministry of the Environment • Municipality of Central Elgin • Municipality of Thames Centre • Ontario Power Generation • Optimist Club of St Thomas • Peacekeeper Park • RBC Blue Water Project • Riggs Engineering • Robin Foster • Salvation Army, St. Thomas • Stewardship Oxford • TD Friends of the Environment Foundation • Thames-Sydenham & Region Source Protection Region • Thames Valley District School Board • Township of Malahide • Municipality of Middlesex Centre • Township of Southwold • Trees Ontario • Unity of London • Upper Thames River CA
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