



2003 Annual Report



2003 LSRCA Board Members

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Town of Bradford-West Gwillimbury
Councillor Gary Lamb, Vice Chair

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(King)
Mayor Margaret Black

Regional Municipality of Durham
(Scugog)
Councillor Larry Corrigan

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(East Gwillimbury)
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(Georgina)
Councillor Margaret Jordan

Town of New Tecumseth
Mayor Larry Keogh

Our Mission:

To provide leadership in the restoration and protection of the environmental health and quality of Lake Simcoe and its watershed with our community, municipal and other government partners.

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Township of Oro-Medonte
Councillor Paul Marshall

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(Uxbridge)
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(Whitchurch-Stouffville)
Councillor Steve Pliakes

Township of Ramara
Councillor Neal Snutch

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(Newmarket)
Mayor Tom Taylor

City of Kawartha Lakes
Councillor Wayne Teel

Regional Municipality of York
(Aurora)
Deputy Mayor John West

Honorary Lifetime Members
(Non-voting)
Joseph O. Dales
George R. Richardson

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Watershed-Wide Initiatives

LAKE SIMCOE ENVIRONMENTAL

Working alongside federal, provincial, municipal and watershed-based community partners the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority is co-ordinating efforts to protect and restore Lake Simcoe as well as the natural heritage features and functions of its watershed. For more information please visit www.lsems.info.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN REVIEW & REGULATIONS

LSRCA staff promote a watershed-based approach to managing natural resources when providing comments on land use planning and development proposals. They also help protect the public and their lands from the potential devastating impacts of floods and erosion hazards by reviewing applications regarding the placement of fill, altering waterways or construction within flood prone areas.

In 2003 the LSRCA

- responded to 307 property information requests;
- investigated 102 potential infractions and;

- issued six permit violations in the Lake Simcoe watershed.

IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Lake Simcoe Water Quality Improvement Program empowers landowners by providing them with the technical and financial support they need to undertake vital conservation projects. Together, these projects are helping reduce phosphorus pollution, improve surface water quality and protect our groundwater resources.

In 2003, 112 projects were completed resulting in 2,445 metres of protected streambank and 12.5 hectares of land naturalized. These efforts protect and restore the watershed's natural heritage features and their functions, including a naturally reproducing coldwater fishery in Lake Simcoe.

NATURAL HERITAGE MAPPING

Better than a "bird's eye-view", the LSRCA's Natural Heritage Maps provide a significant step forward in developing a framework needed to identify and protect environmentally significant areas across the Lake Simcoe watershed. Working with high resolution aerial photographs LSRCA staff are in the process of generating detailed maps for the entire watershed.

The LSRCA has completed Ecological Land Classification (ELC) mapping for the Town of Newmarket, City of Barrie and Regional Municipality of Durham, with modeling and analysis to commence in 2004. ELC mapping is nearing completion for all watersheds within the Regional Municipality of York as part of on-going Oak Ridges Moraine subwatershed planning requirements.

FLOODLINE/NATURAL HAZARD MAPPING

Protecting lives, land and natural water resources are of paramount importance to the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. LSRCA staff have acquired "orthophoto" base mapping for the entire Lake Simcoe watershed. This mapping will be used to more accurately identify the location of floodlines and wetlands for municipal and environmental planners to use during the plan review process.

FLOOD FORECASTING AND WARNING

Floods are most often thought of as a seasonal phenomenon yet wet basements and washed-out roads can be experienced any time of the year. The LSRCA's flood forecasting and warning system notifies school boards, municipalities and the media to promote public safety whenever there are threats of flooding from rainfall or snowmelt events.

The LSRCA is also part of a Water Response Team which is monitoring drought conditions and developing an automated low water condition reporting system.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT & HEALTH MONITORING

It is important to protect our natural resources by ensuring that both the ecosystem and human activities are incorporated into the characterization and development of subwatershed plans.

Subwatershed plans for the Black River, East and West Holland Rivers, and the Maskinonge River are presently underway to ensure compliance with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP). This comprehensive process identifies and prioritizes conservation activities that are destined to positively impact the quality of life enjoyed in these watersheds.

Data was collected at more than 150 Bio-Monitoring Stations in the Regional Municipality of York in 2003. Aquatic Management Inventories for fish and benthic invertebrates were also completed for York Region. A Water Budget was completed for the Black River and work began on similar water budgets for the East and West Holland River subwatersheds in 2003.

SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER MONITORING

The LSRCA expanded its monitoring program in 2003 in order to better characterize surface and groundwater resources in the Lake Simcoe watershed. In addition to monitoring water quantity at eight surface water flow stations, the Conservation Authority also monitors water quality at 30 other sites across the watershed for nutrient levels, metals, and overall water quality. The organization's groundwater monitoring network, which is part of a larger provincial initiative established to track groundwater levels and water quality, was expanded to include six new wells. This brings the number of groundwater monitoring wells to 13.

REFORESTATION

Planting trees in key strategic areas is one of the easiest and most cost effective ways to protect drinking water at its source. Reforesting lands on the Oak Ridges Moraine can help protect headwaters flowing into Lake Simcoe, as well as Ontario's Great Lakes. Since its inception in 1951 the Conservation Authority has planted millions of trees in partnership with its member municipalities and private landowners. In 2003 the Conservation Authority planted 61,900 native trees and shrubs to reforest 33.4 hectares of land and establish 3,320 metres of buffer strips along tributaries in the Lake Simcoe watershed.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The health and quality of Lake Simcoe, the rivers and streams that form its watershed and our local communities has come to the forefront. Utilizing public speaking engagements, press releases, resource materials, corporate events and our website, Conservation Authority staff are empowering residents and visitors to take action to restore and protect the Lake Simcoe watershed.

Anglers, boaters, swimmers, cottagers and everyone living around Lake Simcoe had the opportunity to celebrate the International Year of Fresh Water in 2003 - by participating in the Lake Simcoe Environmental Festival. The one-day event held in Barrie included live music, workshops, an "Eco-Mart" and children's activity area as well as the chance for everyone to sign a pledge to help Save Lake Simcoe.

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority's Annual Conservation Awards program continues to recognize "Environmental Giants" in the Lake Simcoe watershed. By celebrating their success stories with local residents and visitors it is hoped that others will be inspired to join the crusade to save Lake Simcoe.

CONSERVATION LANDS

The Conservation Authority currently owns more than 1,000 hectares of wetlands, forests and environmentally significant areas. While some areas provide visitors with the chance to experience nature first hand, others are kept in a pristine state to protect drinking water at its source.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

The LSRCA's dynamic education team is fostering environmental stewardship by connecting kids with nature through innovative programs offered at the "Professor E.A. Smith Natural Resources Educational Centre" near Bradford. This year close to 3,000 students participated in the Centre's three-day residential program and nearly 500 children were enrolled in its weekend program. Close to 4,000 other citizens from across the watershed also visited the LSRCA's "Nature Centre" to gain insights on the environment.

News Highlights

BARRIE EXPANSION

The Conservation Authority welcomed the City of Barrie as a full member on May 29th, 2003, to expand the LSRCA's area of jurisdiction to include 36.6 square kilometres in the City of Barrie. Since its inception in 1951, the Conservation Authority's name and geographical area of responsibility has changed eight times as its partnerships with local municipalities grew.

TECHNICAL EXPERT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

D. Gayle Wood, LSRCA's Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer, was appointed Co-Chair of the Province's Source Water Protection Technical Experts Committee. This 16-member panel will provide advice on an Ontario-based threat assessment process, including linking groundwater protection to surface water management and the effects of water-takings on the availability and quality of drinking water.

LEVEL III AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH DFO

A "Level Three" agreement was signed with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in December of 2003 which will improve customer service and turn around times as the Conservation Authority adopts a greater role in reviewing proposals that have the potential to impact local fish and wildlife habitat.

Financial Summary

The following information is condensed from the unaudited 2000 financial statment. Copies of the complete auditor's report will be available in March, 2001, at the Conservation Authority's head office at 120 Bayview Parkway, in Newmarket.

Revenue: \$ 4,736,636

Expenditures: \$ 4,736,636

- 52% Municipal Levies
- 7% Provincial & Federal Grant
- 41% Authority Generated
- 16 % Administration
- 23% Watershed Management & Health Monitoring
- 14 % Environmental Plan Review & Regulations

27 % Environmental Services
20 % Land Management & Other

PUBLIC SECTOR SALARY DISCLOSURE ACT 2000 DECLARATION

In 2002, no employees were paid a salary, as defined in the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996, of \$100,000 or more by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

Signed: D. Gayle Wood, Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

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