



Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
2005 Annual Report



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standing of the function and
preciousness of this watershed
and its resources grew. It truly
is a watershed for life."**

R. Bridge, Chair & G. Wood, CAO



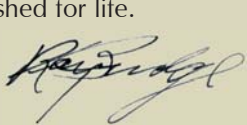
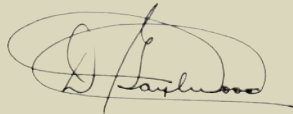
A message from the Chair and CAO

As we enter our 55th year of conservation, we look back on 2005 with tremendous pride for the significant developments in the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) and for the accomplishments of our partners, staff and volunteers throughout the year.

LSRCA launched into the year with a new project looking at the health of the watershed. Assimilative Capacity Studies got off to a fast start at the beginning of 2005. In partnership with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and fully supported by the Province of Ontario, we began two separate studies to maintain and improve the health of our rivers and lakes. Then, at the end of the year, water quality across the province was spotlighted with the introduction of the proposed Clean Water Act aimed at protecting the sources of our drinking water.

Maintaining the health of Lake Simcoe and water sources in the watershed is only half of the LSRCA's job. Conservation Authorities are also tasked with protecting and enhancing the health of watershed residents in flood prone areas. LSRCA staff rolled out new maps of the entire watershed drawn to reflect changes to the old flood and fill lines. These are now called regulation lines and are standardized across the provinces. The new regulation, Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses, Ontario Regulation 97/04, provides an enhanced, comprehensive toolkit for protecting people from a variety of water hazards.

Throughout our work and play in the watershed, our understanding of the function and preciousness of this watershed and its resources grew. It truly is a watershed for life.


Roy Bridge
LSRCA Chair



Gayle Wood
Chief Administrative Officer/
Secretary-Treasurer



Members of the Board of Directors and
Foundation welcome participants to the
LSEMS Conference **Restore the Land
Restore the Lake: Working Together
for a Great Lake**

2005 LSRCA BOARD MEMBERS

Town of Innisfil

Councillor Roy Bridge (Chair)

York Region (East Gwillimbury)

Councillor Virginia Hackson
(Vice-Chair)

Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury

Councillor Mikki Nanowski

York Region (King)

Councillor Jack Rupke

Durham Region (Scugog)

Councillor Bobbie Drew

Honourary Lifetime Member

Joseph O. Dales

Honourary Lifetime Member

George R. Richardson

City of Barrie

Councillor Jerry Moore

City of Barrie

Mr. Eric Bull

York Region (at Large)

Mayor James Young

York Region (Georgina)

Mayor Robert Grossi

Town of New Tecumseth

Councillor Barbara Huson

Durham Region (Brock)

Mayor Keith Shier

Township of Oro-Medonte

Councillor Paul Marshall

Durham Region (Uxbridge)

Regional Councillor
Susan Self

York Region (Whitchurch- Stouffville)

Councillor Ken Ferdinands

Township of Ramara

Councillor Neal Snutch

City of Orillia (Ex-Officio)

Mayor Ron Stevens

York Region (Newmarket)

Mayor Tom Taylor

City of Kawartha Lakes

Councillor George Davidson

York Region (Aurora)

Councillor John G. West



Board of Director members at the Sod
Turning ceremony for the addition to
the Administrative Centre

February 25 Ian Smith (Dir. Drinking Water Program Management Branch, MOE) addresses LSRCA Annual General Meeting on the importance of Conservation Authorities in source water protection.

March 17 Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation approves \$50,000 in funding to begin restoration of Burl's Creek.

April 15 Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation raises close to \$60,000 to support environmental projects at the 17th Annual George R. Richardson Conservation Dinner.



Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy

On October 20th, 2005 the Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy partners – federal and provincial departments and ministries, regional governments, municipalities, citizens and the Chippewas of the Georgina First Nations – held a workshop to announce the latest progress report on the health of Lake Simcoe and its watershed. The highlight of the conference was the release of new monitoring information indicating that phosphorus loading to the lake has decreased.

The Conservation Authority has completed more than 600 remedial projects to reduce pollution entering Lake Simcoe since 1989. In addition, local efforts from groups like the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition and their “Wave Program: Healthy Yards, Healthy Waters”, and the Burl’s Creek Rehabilitation Project Group, are also making a difference by changing public behaviours that negatively impact water quality.

We recognize that the lake is still impaired despite this news and we must remain vigilant to improve lake water quality.

Lake Simcoe Water Quality Improvement Program

Landowner involvement in the Lake Simcoe Water Quality Improvement Program continued to grow in 2005. The program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners within the Lake Simcoe watershed to complete a wide range of conservation projects. More than 165 projects were approved in 2005, ranging from replacing faulty septic systems, to fencing livestock out of streams and providing alternate watering systems. By working together with the watershed’s agricultural community and urban municipalities, we have decreased the amount of pollution entering Lake Simcoe and its tributaries. The Conservation Authority also launched a pilot project to investigate the effectiveness of floating islands in urban stormwater management ponds. If the islands work as well as expected, they will become another “best management practice” to be used to reduce pollution from urban areas.

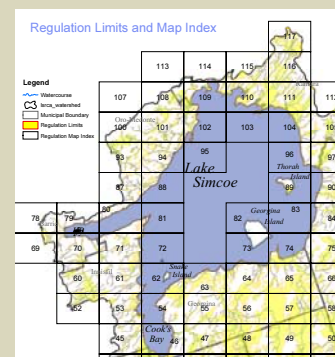
Environmental Plan Review & Regulations

LSRCA staff members promote a watershed-based approach to managing natural resources when providing comments on land use planning and development applications. They also help protect the public and their lands from the potential devastating impacts of floods and erosion hazards by reviewing permit applications for proposed developments within hazardous areas.

In 2005, staff members completed changes to the Regulation Mapping, which included public feedback, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 97/04. Staff anticipate Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources approval of the revised mapping by May 2006, and subsequent implementation.

Flood Line/Natural Hazard Mapping

In 2005, LSRCA developed new mapping that delineates the existing hazards on approximately 3,950 km of stream channel in our watershed, which meets the new Provincial Generic Regulation. Five open houses in November 2005 provided an opportunity for municipal and public consultation. Comments received during and subsequent to the open houses have been considered and revisions are being made to the Regulation Limit mapping. A submission to the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources requesting approval of the new mapping will be made in early 2006. Once the province has approved the new Regulation Limit mapping, it will replace the existing Registered Fill Line maps. Provincial approval is expected prior to May 1, 2006.



Flood Forecasting & Warning

The Conservation Authority's flood forecasting and warning system continues to play an important part in providing our municipalities and other government agencies with information on when and where flooding is likely to occur in our watershed. During 2005, the LSRCA issued 15 flood warning bulletins using the newly implemented web-based faxing and voice mail system. The new automated voice mail system allows the Conservation Authority to provide verbal notification of potential flooding to complement our faxed bulletins.

May 1 LSRCA partners with Suncor Energy Foundation for a community tree plant celebrating Earth Day (April 22). Over 1,000 native trees and shrubs were planted at George R. Richardson Park.

June 23 The Oak Ridges Trail and Bruce Trail Associations officially open 200 kms of continuous trail connecting the two unique land features.

September 10-18 Watershed residents participate in "Clean Up Canadian Shores Week" by sprucing up their favourite patch of waterfront.

Natural Heritage Program

The Conservation Authority continued updates to the Natural Heritage and Land Use mapping of the Lake Simcoe watershed. This mapping utilizes the Ecological Land Classification system to identify the vegetative communities on the landscape, while human land uses are also identified. This detailed mapping is a key component of the natural heritage modeling and policy development, watershed plan development, the Generic Regulation, and the Assimilative Capacity Study. The Natural Heritage Program also completed the updates of several wetland evaluations within the Lake Simcoe basin to clearly identify and protect provincially significant wetlands.

Stream Health Monitoring

The health of the streams in our watershed is monitored by analyzing fish habitat, temperature, fish and benthic macroinvertebrate communities. The fish data is collected using the Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol (OSAP), benthic data is collected using Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network (OBBN) protocol and the stream temperatures are collected using electronic temperature loggers. The stations included 63 fish sites, 62 benthic sites and 82 temperature sites across the watershed.



Surface & Groundwater Monitoring

Surface water programs continued through 2005 with regular sample collections from surface water and precipitation stations. Water and sediment samples were collected as a continuation of the toxic screening program to examine historic DDT contamination and high aluminium concentrations. The surface water flow monitoring network experienced major expansion in 2005 from six to 11 stations. These are an important part of the flood forecasting network, drought response and data collection for model calibration, loading calculations and numerous studies. An

additional gauge was added to the year-round precipitation data collection system. Base flow measurements were conducted across 15 watersheds and sub watersheds of Lake Simcoe, and were added to information collected through 14 groundwater level loggers under the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network.

Source Water Protection

Source Water Protection (SWP) is the protection of surface and groundwater from contamination and overuse. It is the first barrier in a multi-barrier approach to protecting Ontario's water resources. The LSRCA is the lead agency for the SWP initiative in the South Georgian Bay - Lake Simcoe Watershed Region, which is comprised of the LSRCA, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), the Severn Sound Environmental Association (SSEA) and the municipalities within the Black-Severn watershed.

In 2005, a preliminary watershed characterization report, communications strategy, database of technical information, and a list of reports for use in developing the watershed source protection plan were submitted to the province. The work plan and budget were approved by the province for the second phase to be completed in 2006. This phase of the SWP plan will provide conceptual water budgets, water quality conditions assessment, preparation of groundwater and surface water data, stakeholder and municipal consultation, and public outreach and education.

Reforestation

Thirty-one tree and shrub planting projects were completed in 2005 with funding made available through the York Natural Planting Partnership, the Lake Simcoe Water Quality Improvement Program, the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation, municipalities and landowners throughout the watershed. Additionally, 19,200 trees were established under the Forest 2020 pilot program, a federal initiative seeking to establish forests to remove excess carbon from the atmosphere. Community tree planting initiatives had a significant impact on our tree planting efforts with noteworthy support from Earth Day Canada, Sunoco, the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation and Scouts Canada. Included in these figures are 3,100 tree seedlings distributed to several area municipalities for local tree planting events.



Activity Summary

Plan & Review Regulations

- ▶ responded to 31 Official Plan amendments and 158 zoning amendment applications
- ▶ responded to the following applications: 51 subdivision, 116 consent/variances, 103 site plans, and 602 permits
- ▶ responded to 270 property information requests
- ▶ investigated 97 potential infractions
- ▶ issued 7 permit violations but there were no resulting convictions

Forestry

- ▶ 85,150 trees and shrubs established
- ▶ 37 ha of forest established
- ▶ over 3.8 km of streams buffered

Education

- ▶ 3,989 students attended the one-day program at Scanlon Creek's Nature Centre
- ▶ 3,114 students attended the weekday residential program at Scanlon Creek's Professor E.A. Smith Natural Resources Education Centre
- ▶ 432 visitors attended the Professor Smith Educational Centre's weekend residential program
- ▶ 17 children from Bradford and 135 children from Aurora participated in the Conservation Kids program

Foundation Funding

- ▶ over \$187,000 contributed to the LSRCA remedial projects

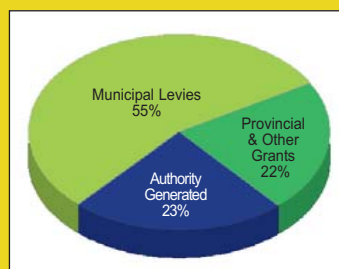
Financial Summary

The following information is condensed from the 2005 Board of Directors approved budget summary. Copies of the complete auditor's report for the year ended December 31, 2005, are anticipated to be available in April 2005, at the Conservation Authority's head office at 120 Bayview Parkway, in Newmarket.

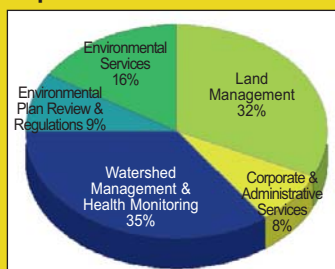
Revenue:	\$14,572,870
Municipal Levies	7,994,450
Provincial & Other Grants	3,223,645
Authority Generated	3,354,775

Expenditures:	\$14,572,870
Watershed Management	5,124,520
& Health Monitoring	
Environmental Plan	1,367,750
Review & Regulations	
Environmental Services	2,278,300
Land Management	4,627,140
Corporate & Administrative	1,175,160
Services	

Revenue



Expenditures

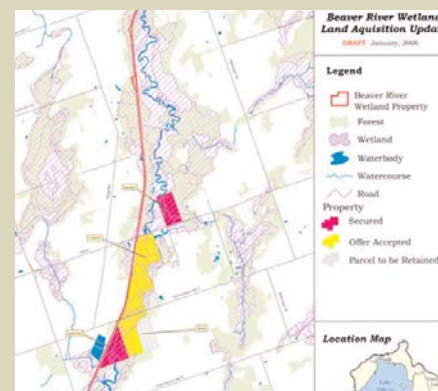


October 24 Native tree and shrub seedlings are provided to private landowners as part of the LSRCA's reforestation efforts.

Conservation Lands

The LSRCA considers wetlands to be an important element of a healthy watershed because they serve as the link between land and water resources. Through an aggressive land acquisition program concentrated on the Beaver River Wetlands, the Conservation Authority is able to protect these environmentally significant areas. At the same time, it provides excellent recreational and educational opportunities for residents now and in the future.

In 2005, the Conservation Authority acquired three properties within the Beaver River Wetland Complex and regional storm flood plain, with two additional purchases scheduled to close in March



2006. The total area secured in 2005 was 119.6 ha. These acquisitions were made possible thanks to a bequest made by Miss Katharine Symons and a generous contribution from the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation.



Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation

The Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation is a charitable organization dedicated to raising funds for projects designed to restore

and protect Lake Simcoe and its watershed. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, the Foundation's efforts extend across the entire watershed. In 2005, the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation made the following contributions: \$52,000 for storm water management; \$50,000 for the Burl's Creek restoration; \$50,000 for Beaver River wetlands acquisition; \$25,000 for education programs; and, \$10,000 towards reforestation projects.

All of these projects serve to protect and restore Lake Simcoe and are carried out by the LSRCA. This work is possible due to the generous financial contributions of individuals and businesses committed to preserving the Lake Simcoe watershed.

November 24 Regional conservationists are celebrated at the Annual Conservation Awards Gala for making key contributions to improving the health and quality of Lake Simcoe and its watershed.

December 5 The proposed Clean Water Act is introduced at the Ontario Provincial Legislature.

Conservation Education

The programs delivered by Educational Services provide a wide variety of environmentally based outdoor education experiences for children from all over the watershed. Weekday and weekend residential programs at the Professor E.A. Smith Natural Resources Education Centre and day programs at the Scanlon Creek Nature Centre cover a variety of topics. Some examples include communities in nature, the diversity of living things, species under threat of extinction, the natural food chain and our popular Find-a-Bug program. All of our educational opportunities aim to develop awareness and foster an appreciation for nature.

Outreach programs to communities expanded in 2005. The Conservation Kids summer nature program, presented at Sheppard's Bush Conservation Area in association with Aurora's Leisure Services Department, offered six weeks of environmentally themed programs, crafts and games. New for 2005 was the Conservation Kids program for children from Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil, in association with the Bradford West Gwillimbury Recreation Department.

Ongoing efforts to improve our educational facilities continued with the completion of upgrades to the Educational Centre's dormitory and the addition of new furniture to the lounge.

Community Relations

LSRCA events would not be a success without the hard work and dedication of watershed residents and our community partners. We encourage watershed residents to take an active role in caring for the



natural resources that sustain them through a wide variety of public education and outreach programs designed to educate, inspire and empower. Some examples of our popular programs that attract strong community participation include the Annual Sunoco Tree Planting Event in Newmarket, student pledges to help Save Lake Simcoe at the York Region Groundwater Festival, and the participation of community and naturalist groups in the Marsh Monitoring Program Training & Orientation Session at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area.

2005 Conservation Award Winners

The LSRCA recognized "Environmental Giants"

across the watershed at its annual Conservation Awards Gala in November. Master of Ceremonies Jed Goldberg, President of Earth Day Canada, oversaw the event. This year's awards were presented to:

- *George R. Richardson Conservation Award of Honour* to Angus Morton
- *Conservation Award of Merit* to John McCallum
- *Media Recognition Award* to Peter Wukasch
- *Soil Conservation Award* to Noah & Natalie Howard
- *Education Award* jointly to York Catholic District School Board, York Region District School Board and Simcoe County District School Board
- *Water Conservation Award* to Koch-Glitsch Canada Company

Special recognition was given to the Lake Simcoe Watershed Municipalities for their dedication to the protection and improvement of Lake Simcoe and its watershed. The following volunteers were applauded for contributing to the LSRCA's success:

- Twin Lakes Conservation Club
- Tamara Caldwell
- Karl Sorensen



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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