

Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority **2010** ANNUAL REPORT



A YEAR IN REVIEW

2010 was an outstanding year, once again, for the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA). The year brought new challenges, triumphs, and continued support.

Authority staff were busy with many projects throughout the year; continuing to deliver programs and services such as Ganaraska Forest recreation, outdoor education, community outreach, flood forecasting and warning, and geographical information systems. Watershed stewardship, planning and regulations, as well as groundwater management also played an important role throughout the year.

The rainfall and snowmelt of January 25th 2010 created significant flooding for a number of our watershed residents. The Conservation Authority and Town of Cobourg have begun work on or completed three major projects to address the flooding concerns brought to the forefront by this event. We will continue to address these problems in 2011.

We are now into the first year working from our new outdoor education centre, the Ganaraska Forest Centre. Early successes promise exciting new developments for the future.

While we look forward to a promising 2011, we are proud of our accomplishments from 2010. This report will detail some of those undertakings. At this time we wish to thank our members and staff for their continued support. Chair Raymond Benns would like to add his thanks to the Full Authority Board members for their support throughout the year.

As eight members of the Board will be leaving to seek new challenges, we want to acknowledge their enthusiasm, dedication and support. They were a great addition to the Conservation Authority and we hope they move on with a sense of accomplishment in the work that was carried out at the Authority.

Please take time to review this report and contact our office with any feedback or questions.

Raymond Benns, Chair
Linda J. Laliberte, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer



THE GANARASKA FOREST OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

SPECIAL THANKS

The Conservation Authority would like to extend our gratitude towards all those who provide their time to volunteer with our organization and support our programs and services.

Thank you to those who continue to support Ganaraska Forest recreational and forest management; especially the Ganaraska Snowmobile Club who once again contributed significant funding and volunteer labour towards the maintenance of roads and trails in the forest. Contributions were also made by the club towards the operation of the canteen and other projects. The Conservation Authority wishes to thank snowmobile club members for their continued support of the forest, with a special thanks to Bill Stapleton, president of the club. The Ganaraska Forest Horse Club also contributed funding and volunteer labour; the horse trailer parking area has been expanded to accommodate more trailers, construction of a trail to the small pond next to the lot provides a location to water horses, and improvements to the road leading to the parking area has been completed.

Thank you to those who continue to support the Building for Change Campaign; the redeveloped Ganaraska Forest Centre has and will be one of the most successful ventures of the Conservation Authority.

Special thanks to Mysie Vanhinsberg for the kind donation of taxidermy animal specimens to the Ganaraska Forest Centre. The Conservation Authority has been providing environmental education programs to schools for over thirty years and this collection will provide a valuable resource for enhancing these programs.



GANARASKA FOREST OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

The community has embraced the larger and newly constructed Ganaraska Forest Centre (GFC) and in 2010, over 6,000 students and hundreds of guests for weekend sporting and social events visited the facility. The environmentally friendly building can accommodate group sizes of up to 80 students for 2-and 3-night stays, where visitors participate enthusiastically in our hands-on, experiential outdoor education programs. All programs are developed to meet or exceed expectations in the Ontario Ministry of Education's curriculum and we frequently adapt our outdoor education program to reflect real and current global issues, including the addition of Alternative Energy, and Biodiversity programs in 2011.

2009 PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Ganaraska Forest Centre is host to a number of popular public events, including Family Ski Day, Holiday Crafts, Owl Prowl, Maple Syrup Day, and Halloween Howl. Staff also run our fun, Nature Nuts summer camp for 6 to 14 years olds, each year between July and August.

FOREST RECREATION

2010 was a year of exciting new developments regarding recreational use of the Ganaraska Forest. Equestrian use continued to increase over the past year in part because of renewed interest and growth of the Ganaraska Forest Horse Club. Improvements were made to the horse trailer parking area including the expansion of the lot to accommodate more trailers, construction of a trail to the small pond next to the lot which provides a location to water horses and improvements to the road leading to the parking area.

A few years ago the trail route used by the Paul's Dirty Enduro mountain bike race was designated as an Epic Trail by the International Mountain Biking Association. This prestigious designation is awarded to the finest mountain biking trails in North America. Over the past summer, volunteers that organize the annual event permanently marked the course which makes extensive use of single track trails in the Central Forest. This has generated a lot of interest and resulted in a marked increase in mountain bike use at the Ganaraska Forest.

Improved services at the Forest Centre include indoor washrooms, showers, and canteen service on weekends. These improvements have been well received by recreational users and will no doubt increase the popularity of the Ganaraska Forest in years to come. In 2010 the Ganaraska Forest attracted approximately 1,600 annual forest members.



FOREST MANAGEMENT

The Ganaraska Forest showed no major outbreaks of any insects or disease in 2010, yet it continues to see endemic levels of both gypsy moth and pine false webworm. Some damage occurred in pockets of hardwood first thing in the spring due to unusually warm temperatures and then frost in early May. There were no reports of wild fires during the fire season. Forest roads and trails were graded in the late summer and early fall in a joint operation between the Conservation Authority and the Ganaraska Snowmobile Club.

Two timber contracts were awarded to selectively harvest various plantations in the forest. Gene Eng Forest Products of Uxbridge was contracted for the thinning of 95 hectares of red pine plantations in the Central and West forests; the harvest included 4,012 cubic meters of sawlogs and pulpwood. Northern Pressure Treated Wood was also contracted to selectively harvest 4,430 cubic meters of utility poles and sawlogs from 88 hectares in the central forest. Harvesting inspections were carried out on a weekly basis to ensure contractors were complying with the terms and conditions of their contracts and minimizing damage during logging operations. A total of 167 hectares of plantation marking was completed for the selective harvest of conifer sawlogs and utility poles from the forest to occur in 2011.

STEWARDSHIP

Clean Water–Healthy Land Financial Assistance Program

Forty-four stewardship projects were approved in 2010 for implementation within local watersheds. Landowners, residents, community groups, schools and businesses within the Municipality of Clarington, Municipality of Port Hope, Township of Hamilton and Town of Cobourg can receive assistance to complete stewardship projects.

Tree Planting

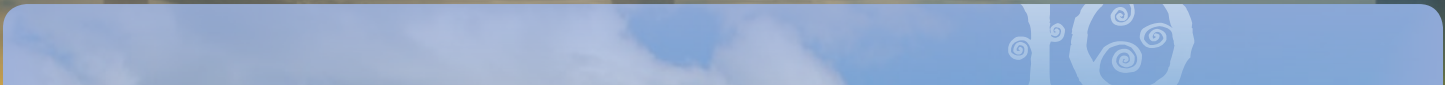
Over 16,000 tree seedlings were planted across the region in 2010. Seedlings were planted by the landowner or through the GRCA Tree Planting Program. Eligible landowners received funding to subsidize the cost of the seedling purchase or planting.

Yellow Fish Road

The Conservation Authority with the assistance of C.R. Gummow Public School and CDCI East painted yellow fish next to 89 storm drains in the Town of Cobourg and distributed fish-shaped brochures to households to educate residents about storm drain management.

Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program

Thirty-four eligible residents near municipal water supplies received assistance through the Province of Ontario to implement voluntary projects, in which all were completed. These projects will help to protect sources of municipal drinking water.



WATERSHED MONITORING

The Conservation Authority operates a comprehensive watershed monitoring program that includes surface water quality, baseflow, shoreline erosion and wetland monitoring. In 2010, the Conservation Authority continued to partner with member municipalities on the sampling of streams and drinking water intakes for water quality during high runoff events. During these events, pollutants can runoff with rainwater to creeks, rivers and eventually Lake Ontario, which is a significant source of drinking water. From these programs the Conservation Authority gains a better understanding of current watershed conditions and their long term trends. Monitoring data forms the basis for many reports produced and projects completed by the Conservation Authority and their partners, such as watershed plans which are created to conserve and enhance natural watershed features that are important in maintaining watershed health.

WATERSHED PLANNING

Four watershed plans were approved in 2010 by the Full Authority Board. These included: Ganaraska River Watershed Plan, Wilmot Creek Watershed Plan, Graham Creek Watershed Plan, and the Lovekin Creek, Bouchette Point Creek and Port Granby Creek Watershed Plan. These watershed plans were written to provide guidance and recommendations for the conservation, enhancement, and sustainable management of the particular watershed and its resources.

In conjunction with the watershed planning process, Check Your Watershed Day was held on July 17th, 2010 in the Gages Creek watershed. Volunteers visited 25 stream-road crossings, taking basic measurements such as stream width, depth, and flow. This information aids in the understanding of summer stream flow.

FLOOD FORECASTING & WARNING

On January 25th, 2010 snowmelt and heavy rainfall combined to cause flooding of low lying areas in the Town of Cobourg and surrounding areas. River watch crews were dispatched to flood-vulnerable locations in the watershed to document the extent of the flood and its impacts. Through cooperation with the Town of Cobourg, work has begun to address some of the issues experienced by residents during this event.

LOW WATER RESPONSE

While in January the Conservation Authority region received too much water, from February to May there was not enough to sustain normal streamflows and groundwater levels began to fall as well. On May 18th, 2010 the Conservation Authority issued a level 1 low water advisory and recommended water conservation throughout its jurisdiction to prevent further water shortages. On July 5th, 2010 the Conservation Authority declared that this advisory was no longer in affect.

NATURAL HAZARDS

The extent of floodplain areas within the Town of Cobourg would significantly impact on the viability of the older area of the town if special policies were not in place to allow development while ensuring safety of citizens. These special area policies (SPAs) must be approved by the Ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Natural Resources. During the last Official Plan 5-year review, the province requested that the municipality update these policies that were currently 25 years old. Technical and planning documents supporting updated policies were submitted to the provincial ministries in 2010 after extensive public review and comment.

In January 2010, flooding within the Town of Cobourg impacted a number of houses and structures. In response, a number of projects were undertaken to address the concerns of affected residents. These include:

Midtown Creek Flood Damage Reduction Pond – the design of a large pond structure to reduce flooding above the railway tracks and through the downtown of Cobourg.

Massey Creek Channelization - the final design of the extension of the Massey Creek Channelization, designed to reduce flooding impacts within the Wilmont Road industrial subdivision

Brook Creek Flood Reduction Program - a number of projects were begun to identify and work to resolve flooding and erosion concerns on Brook Creek

GROUNDWATER PROGRAM

During 2010, a large number of projects were completed under the groundwater program. The Conservation Authority delivered 6 safe water well, septic system, and geothermal energy seminars in the Township of Hamilton, the Municipality of Port Hope, and the Municipality of Clarington. The seminars were designed to provide information and educational materials to watershed residents and help them to protect their water supply wells and septic systems. The seminars were delivered in partnership with municipal partners, the health unit/department, well and geothermal energy contractors, and septic systems consultants.

During 2010, Conservation Authority staff completed 39 site visits to residential water supply wells. Through these site visits, staff provided watershed residents with valuable technical support related to groundwater quantity and quality, water sampling procedure, and domestic well water treatment systems.

Conservation Authority staff participated in the Region of Durham's groundwater flow model peer review and steering committee. Staff also participated in a Watershed Report Card (WRC) Technical Committee established to review and recommend changes to the technical guidance documents for watershed report cards. In late 2010, the committee submitted a recommended technical guidance report to Conservation Ontario Council. This report will be used to revise the 2003 WRC Guidelines and publish a 2011 version for Ontario Conservation Authorities' use.



TERRESTRIAL NATURAL HERITAGE

The terrestrial natural heritage program saw a continuation of monitoring efforts in 2010 such as forest bird monitoring and the Durham Coastal Wetland Monitoring program, as well as continuation of Lake Ontario shoreline surveys, with the objective of producing a report on the status of these in the near future. A large amount of effort was also invested in the Conservation Authority terrestrial natural heritage strategy, a draft of which is nearing completion.

As part of the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative partnership, the Conservation Authority undertook a volunteer prairie planting event on September 19th, 2010 with support from the Ontario Trillium Fund. The goal was to expand an existing prairie remnant adjacent to the new Ganaraska Forest Centre. Interpretive materials will be produced in 2011 to incorporate this prairie into the Centre's educational programs.

Road ecology is a new science that looks at the impacts of roads on the environment. In 2010, the Conservation Authority undertook some preliminary testing to determine if a road density measure (length of road per unit area) could be useful in watershed planning, for example to determine if there are correlations to be drawn between roads and the presence of sensitive species. The measure was applied to all of the watersheds originating on the Oak Ridges Moraine. Initial results look promising, and a presentation of this work was given at the A.D. Latonell Conference in November.

FISHERIES

The Conservation Authority conducted and partnered in a wide range of aquatic assessments, management, and research in 2010. Assessments focused on monitoring and compiling aquatic resource information for Wilmot Creek, Wesleyville Creek, Ganaraska River, and Cobourg Creek watersheds. The Conservation Authority monitored the Sea Lamprey weir on Cobourg Creek, capturing a total of 6,565 fish composed of 32 different species. Conservation Authority staff continued to support the Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program on the Cobourg Creek watershed by monitoring and sampling smolts leaving Cobourg Creek.

The Conservation Authority completed numerous fisheries habitat improvement projects, including planting over 4,000 trees along the Ganaraska River, through the GRCA Tree Planting Program, building a rocky ramp fishway to allow upstream passage to over 8km of river and constructing a stream bank stabilization structure on Cobourg Creek, as well as connecting 60 m (171 m²) of side-channel on Wilmot Creek.

The Conservation Authority continued to work on the Fisheries Habitat Management Plans for the Lovekin Creek, Bouchette Point, Port Granby Creek, and Graham Creek watersheds, and Fisheries Management Plans for Cobourg Creek and the Ganaraska River.



GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

The Conservation Authority's GIS department spent this year supporting many Watershed Services projects, including the continued partnership with the Town of Cobourg to manage the Town's GIS, as well as the Municipality of Port Hope to provide GIS and mapping support to all departments. The Conservation Authority has also expanded its GIS services to the Northumberland County GIS Cooperative. Additionally the Conservation Authority also hosts the CAMaps.ca website in partnership with other Conservation Authorities, and Conservation Ontario, to provide a common Internet mapping application for Conservation Authorities.

PLAN REVIEW AND REGULATIONS

In 2010, the Conservation Authority provided input on a total of 61 Municipally circulated Planning Act applications (i.e. land severances, zoning or official plan amendments) Comments and recommendations on the natural hazard, and natural heritage policies consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, were provided to watershed municipalities, for consideration in their role as approval authority. Review and input on a total of 12 on-going subdivision applications continued in 2010 in addition to 15 site plan applications for major development proposals. In addition, a total of 115 property information requests and legal inquiries were responded to.

The Conservation Authority issued a total of 73 permits for work under its Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (Ont. Reg. 168/06). The department continued its involvement in the 407 East Environmental Assessment process, and completed two land donations/acquisitions as additions to the Ganaraska Forest.

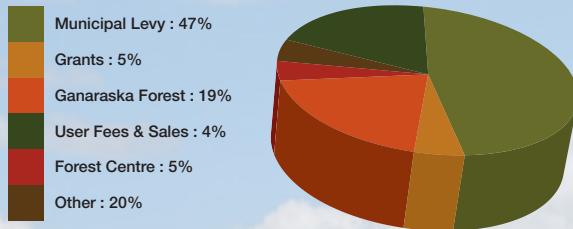


DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM

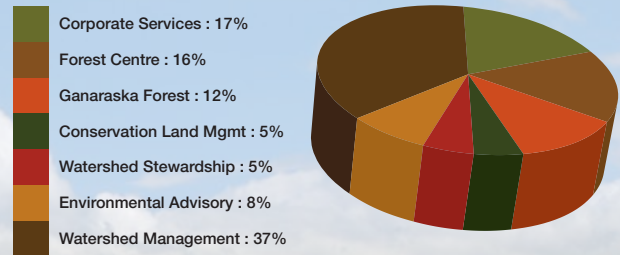
The Proposed Ganaraska Assessment Report was submitted to the Minister of the Environment on October 29th, 2010. The Assessment Report is a technical document developed in accordance with the Ganaraska Region Source Protection Area Terms of Reference, regulations and Technical Rules that identifies and evaluates threats to municipal drinking water quality and quantity. The Assessment Report contains all relevant data and scientific methodologies to assess the vulnerability of the municipal drinking water sources.

Since the submission of the Assessment Report, the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Committee has shifted its focus to the development of the Ganaraska Source Protection Plan. The Plan will establish policies to reduce or eliminate significant threats to water quality and will identify who is responsible for taking action, setting timelines, and establishing performance measures for plan implementation. Where possible, the Plan will build on work currently underway and will recognize or reinforce existing management practices relevant to drinking water source protection.

REVENUES – (WHICH DOES NOT INCLUDE BUILDING FOR CHANGE REVENUES/DONATIONS)



EXPENDITURES - (DOES NOT INCLUDE GFC REDEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES AND AMORTIZATION)

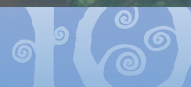


FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In 2010, the budget totalled \$2,789,551.00. The municipal general levy was increased by a 2% assessment growth and a 2% economic adjustment and then adjusted to reflect a corrected allocation funding formula. The general levy for 2010 was \$788,235.00 which represents about 27% of the total revenues less Forest Centre donations.

This past year there were several capital projects within the Conservation Authority, which are mainly funded by the watershed municipalities and describe within the annual report. Some of the capital projects will be completed in 2010 while others will carry on into 2011. As well, the source protection planning program continued. This project is fully funded by the province until 2012 when plans are to be completed.

The chart below shows the revenues for 2010. The levy shown is a combined total of general and benefiting levy. The Ganaraska Forest timber sales of \$378,700.00 and memberships of \$171,467.00 are included in the Ganaraska Forest revenue. The User Fees and Sales consist of the revenues from the stewardship programs, watershed services, as well as the water resources fees. The category of "Other" includes direct funded projects of the Conservation Authority. This includes \$341,006.00 for the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Water Protection initiative.



2010 GRCA Full Authority Board

Raymond Bennis, Chair
 Mark Lovshin, Vice Chair
 Twila Marston
 Brian Fallis
 Cal Morgan
 Linda Thompson
 Bob Spooner
 Miriam Mutton
 Charlie Trim
 Gord Robinson
 David Marsh

Township of Alnwick/Haldimand
 Township of Hamilton
 Township of Hamilton
 Township of Cavan Monaghan
 Municipality of Port Hope
 Municipality of Port Hope
 Town of Cobourg
 Town of Cobourg
 Municipality of Clarington
 Municipality of Clarington
 City of Kawartha Lakes

2010 Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Staff

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 Mark Peacock
 Linda Givelas

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 Greg Wells
 Jeff Moxley
 Amy Griffiths
 Barb Szwakob
 Bob Penwell
 Brenda Clancy
 Brian Morrison
 Christie Peacock
 George Elgear
 Ian Jeffrey
 Joanne May
 Ken Towle
 Madeline Whetung
 Michelle Giddings
 Mike Smith
 Pam Lancaster
 Ralph Shaw
 Ryan Goodall
 Sable Guttman
 Shayne Pilgrim
 Steve McMullen
 Winnie Finnie

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
 Director, Watershed Services
 Property Manager, Ganaraska Forest Centre
 (as of Sep 2010)
 Manager, Watershed Services
 Manager, Planning and Regulations
 Geographical Information System Coordinator
 Marketing and Communications Officer
 Forest Centre Assistant Cook
 Forester
 Forest Centre Cook (as of Sep 2010)
 Fisheries Biologist
 Water Resources Engineer
 General Superintendent
 GIS Technician (as of Aug 2010)
 Administrative Assistant, Planning and Regulations
 Terrestrial Ecologist
 Outdoor Education Instructor (until Aug 2010)
 Bookkeeper
 Water Resources Technician
 Stewardship Technician
 Outdoor Education Instructor
 Outdoor Education Instructor
 Gatehouse Keeper
 Forest Centre Technician
 Forest Recreation Technician
 Forest Centre Cook (until Oct 2010)



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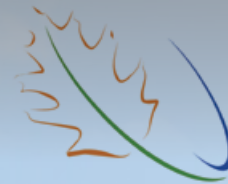


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Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority staff.



GANARASKA FOREST CENTRE

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