



2009 Annual Report



LONG POINT REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



A Message from the Chairman

The Long Point Region Conservation Authority certainly did a lot in 2009 to move the yardsticks forward. Probably the most exciting development which started nearly two years ago and came to fruition this past fall was the Board's unanimous decision to acquire the former administration offices of the Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board in Tillsonburg – as the new administrative office for the Long Point Region Conservation Authority. The 16,000

square foot building is ready made for our needs, provides LPRCA with a high profile location, enhances the conservation authority's ability to service its stakeholders – and best of all will be financed without the need for levy dollars from our municipal partners. I would like to thank staff, as well as, Vice-chair Ron Sackrider and Land Acquisition Chair Larry Chanda who worked with myself on the Building Committee to make this all-important initiative happen not only in a timely, but also cost-effective manner. I would also like to thank the Board of the Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board. The Tobacco Board, will as part of the purchase, lease part of the new administration office from LPRCA – allowing both organizations to continue to effectively service the agricultural community.

As part of LPRCA's ever-continuing efforts to enhance services for its watershed constituents, Long Point Region Conservation Authority is entering into a feasibility study with the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority to investigate potential efficiencies between the two organizations. The two conservation authorities, along with Catfish Creek and Grand River CAs have effectively been working together the last number of years in regards to Source Water Protection – and the success of this partnership sparked

interest within the conservation authorities to see if taking the partnership to the next step makes sense.

In the fall of 2009, the Board along with senior staff held a day-long strategy session to review the services being provided by the LPRCA and how these services enable LPRCA to deliver upon its mandate. From this very successful session an initiative has been developed that will see subcommittees consisting of staff and board members that will examine three core business areas for LPRCA. These are: watershed services, parks and forestry. These subcommittees will thoroughly examine these service areas and bring back a report later in 2010 with recommendations that eventually will be incorporated in a new LPRCA strategy to be released in early 2011.

On top of these major initiatives, LPRCA successfully held the 20th Annual War of 1812 Re-enactment event at Backus Heritage Conservation Area, highlighted its on-going partnership with Camp Trillium through the 2nd Annual Festival of Trees and passed an annual budget respective of the current economic climate. I again wish to thank my fellow board members, staff and municipal partners for their continued support and look forward to another great year.

*Buck Sloat
Chairman*



General Manager's Report

Where did the year go? Truly one of the nice things about working for the Long Point Region Conservation Authority is that there is never a shortage of work, and as such, time flies by. 2009 marked a number of major accomplishments – none probably more important to the organization at this time than the acquisition of LPRCA's new administration office. The reaction from staff has been overwhelmingly positive and we look forward to continuing to serve all

our watershed constituents from the former Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board office in Tillsonburg. The new facility certainly provides the space and profile to assist LPRCA in enhancing services for its stakeholders.

A number of new staff joined LPRCA in 2009 and are already proving themselves valuable assets in serving watershed residents when it comes to their source water protection, forestry, habitat enhancement and planning needs. An important part of making sure those services are delivered in an effective and efficient manner was put into place last fall when Senior Management along with LPRCA Board members met for a one-day strategic session. From that will come a review of a number of conservation authority departments in order to identify any possible improvements to LPRCA's existing service delivery.

The Long Point Region Conservation Authority acquired two significant properties in 2009 – approximately 29 acres abutting the eastern edge of the Backus Heritage Conservation Area and 23.6 acres on the headwaters of Young's Creek southeast of Delhi. On behalf of the Long Point Region Conservation Authority I would like to thank Fritz and Helga Becker, as well as, Peter and Leasa Janssen for considering LPRCA in these acquisitions. Both properties are ecologically significant and provide opportunities for the conservation authority to reduce local erosion while enhancing water quality. It looks as if 2010 will continue to be a busy time for LPRCA's Land Acquisition Committee, which is currently looking at a number of other potential land donations throughout the watershed. I would like to recognize the financial assistance from the Greenlands Challenge, a partnership funded by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and jointly administered with the Nature Conservancy of Canada; the Backus Woods Enhancement Campaign Committee; and the Long Point Foundation for bringing these initiatives to fruition.

2010, much like 2009, promises to be a year filled with challenges and excitement and I look forward to each one as it comes. My thanks to the Board and staff for their continued support, and I wish all the best in 2010.

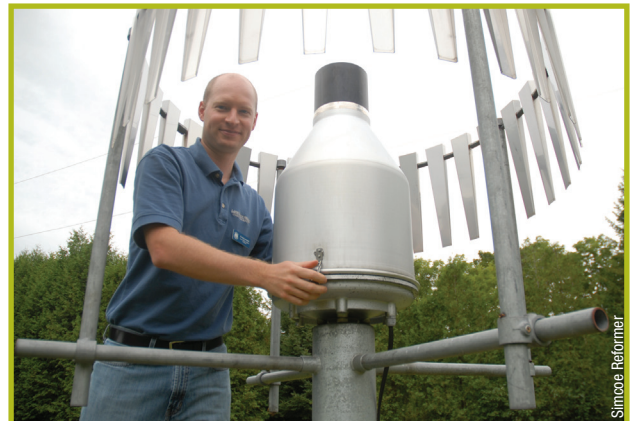
*Cliff Evanitski
General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer*

Highlights of LPRCA's Work in 2009

Flood Forecasting and Warning Services

Flooding is a natural process. While the Conservation Authority has done much to reduce the risk to life and property, some flooding in developed areas is still inevitable. The Authority, therefore, operates a flood forecasting and warning system to provide municipalities and residents with accurate advanced warning of possible high water levels and flood events. LPRCA is responsible for monitoring stream gauges, weather stations and snow conditions and to forecast potential floods within our watershed. LPRCA has access to weather information at the local level which allows for timely alerts to be issued in advance to potential floods. When necessary LPRCA will disseminate flood messages to local municipalities, other agencies and the media.

- Issued 9 messages including 5 High Water Bulletins to advise the public of high water conditions due to snow melt and heavy rainfall along water courses and the Lake Erie shoreline; 2 Flood Advisories and 2 Flood Warnings for local waterways
- Assisted with removal of ice jams at Port Burwell with funding assistance from Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
- Finalized a flood prediction model for Vienna to improve the speed and accuracy of flood forecasting and warning capabilities
- Assisted the Municipality of Bayham to complete a comprehensive study of the Big Otter Creek water levels to assist the municipality with the management and early preparedness for floods in the Village of Vienna
- Marked flood stage elevations on both upstream and downstream sides of the piers on North and Edison bridges in Vienna to assist LPRCA and the Municipality of Bayham in recognizing potential flood conditions and implementing emergency response programs
- Removed core samples from stop logs at Teeterville CA dam to check for deterioration



Planning and Regulatory Services

In order to maintain the vitality of our watersheds and also protect people's lives and property from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion, LPRCA works with landowners to ensure that development will not create risks to public safety, and that the natural features of the watershed are protected. The Authority regulates areas in and around wetlands, watercourses, Lake Erie and steep slopes. Recommendations with respect to natural hazards and natural heritage features are made based on provincial policies.

LPRCA also provides technical advice to municipalities on subdivision proposals, zoning changes, severances and minor variances, as well as, municipal planning documents, which are approved by municipalities. LPRCA provides information and expertise that helps municipalities and the developers meet provincial policy requirements while ensuring the protection of habitat and other environmental features within the watershed.

- Provided watershed-wide technical assistance to municipalities regarding land use planning and development services
- Commented on 42 municipally circulated planning applications
- Responded to over 125 property inquiries
- Processed 140 applications under the Conservation Authorities Act Section 28 regulation relating to "Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses"
- Screened proposals which could affect fish habitat in accordance with LPRCA's Level II Agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). Met with 20 landowners and provided 16 letters of advice recommending measures to avoid negative impacts on fish habitat



Watershed Monitoring & Reporting



Environmental monitoring provides ongoing information on both surface and groundwater quality and quantity, and other environmental indicators within the watershed. LPRCA monitors, evaluates and reports on our watershed's existing conditions which allow us to offer important environmental services and programs to municipalities and the watershed community. Staff also focused efforts on provincial priorities in terms of source water protection measures for the Lake Erie Source Protection Region.

2009 Sampling Highlights:

- Monitored high flows on Big Otter Creek near Calton in partnership with the Grand River Conservation Authority; 62 samples were collected during five high flow events and 19 baseflow samples collected as part of the Big Otter Spring Freshet Sampling Project
- Inspected lamprey barriers on behalf of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Monitored groundwater levels and quality at 12 monitoring wells as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network
- Surface water quality was sampled and analyzed at 10 locations for several different parameters in partnership with MOE
- Completed eighth consecutive year of collecting surface water quality data under the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program
- Established five new benthic sampling sites in watersheds where historic water quality data is incomplete
- Sampled benthic invertebrates at 15 stream sites. These are insects that live in the bottom of streams, and are excellent indicators of water quality
- Drafted and submitted a report to MNR addressing issues and requirements to be considered when recommending a Level III low water advisory in the Big Otter Creek Watershed
- Continued to monitor precipitation and stream flows throughout the year in order to make comparisons with historic levels in support of the Ontario Low Water Response Program
- 2009 was a relatively good year for water levels with no low water advisories issued
- Secured funding to undertake phase two of the Provincial Groundwater Low Water Response Indicators Pilot Project
- Collected data at 6 groundwater monitoring sites in support of the low water response pilot project to help determine whether groundwater fluctuations can be used to indicate low water conditions
- Assisted with the source protection planning process as a partner in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region
- Commented on Long Point Region/Kettle Creek/Catfish Creek Tier 2 Water Budget and Stress Assessment Report
- Monitored stream flow, precipitation and weather patterns as tools to update watershed conditions
- Initiated work to develop Tier 3 water budget for the Long Point Region watershed
- Initiated a process to develop Watershed Report Cards which will be released in 2010
- Collected 11 nutrient management samples from Trout Creek including water samples and flow rates



Conservation Services

By working with landowners, public interest groups and watershed municipalities, the LPRCA offers a variety of services and programs aimed at encouraging and demonstrating good land stewardship principles. Conservation services activities allow for a hands-on approach to help maintain and restore natural spaces, improve water quality and promote stewardship practices within the watershed.

- Provided technical expertise and financial incentives to watershed landowners for erosion control and tree planting projects on private lands
- Acted as the designated local resource agency to provide technical advice to farmers interested in undertaking environmental projects through the Greencover Canada Program
- Assisted the Township of South West Oxford and Norfolk County with the delivery of their municipal Roadside Tree Planting programs
- Just under 154,000 seedlings and tall stock trees were distributed and planted throughout the watershed to increase local forest cover
- Together with our partners, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation, assisted 15 landowners to reforest just over 160 acres through the OPG/Forest Corridor project
- Constructed a cold storage facility with funding assistance from OPG and Trees Ontario Foundation
- Fire is needed to maintain tall grass prairie sites by preventing trees and other non-prairie plants from gaining a foothold. LPRCA staff assisted the Alternative Land Use Services Program (ALUS) and Norfolk County fire department to successfully burn a 15-acre prairie site north of Simcoe
- Partnered with ALUS to plant over 200 acres of native tall grass prairie
- The Clean Water Project provided technical and financial assistance to rural landowners in Oxford County to improve water quality. Two septic system upgrade projects and decommissioning a well were approved with grants totalling \$7500
- \$31,950 in funding was provided to 4 landowners through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program for activities that protect municipal drinking water sources. Eligible projects supported in Norfolk and Oxford counties include upgrading existing water wells, connecting to a municipal drinking water service line and upgrading septic systems
- Received \$30,000 from the federally funded Habitat Stewardship Program and \$18,000 from MNR's Species at Risk fund to create and enhance wetland habitat for species at risk within the Lower Big Creek watershed
- Essex-Erie Aquatic Species at Risk Recovery Strategy was implemented focusing on restoring or enhancing habitat for rare fish in priority areas of the Big Otter and Big Creek watersheds. This work was undertaken in partnership with several jurisdictions in the Lake Erie watershed and private landowners with funding support from MNR and Environment Canada



Land Acquisition

Lands Acquired as of December 2009

The Authority owns a network of some 11,900 acres of natural open space throughout the watershed. Much of this land is dedicated to the protection of significant features such as wetlands and forests and five active conservation areas which provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature appreciation.

In 2009, LPRCA added just over 58 acres (23.5 ha) to its landholdings, including:

- 29 acres along Dedrick Creek adjacent to Backus Heritage Conservation Area
- 23.6 acres of provincially significant wetlands in the Young's Creek watershed
- A 16,000 square foot building with more than 5 acres of property was purchased in Tillsonburg as LPRCA's new main office location. It is anticipated the move will occur early in 2010

MUNICIPALITY	ACRES ACQUIRED DURING 2009	ACRES TO DATE
Municipality of Bayham	0	75.00
County of Brant	0	1501.50
Haldimand County	0	177.00
Township of Malahide	0	0.00
Norfolk County	52.6	8996.60
Township of Norwich	0	750.00
Township of SW Oxford	0	381.00
Town of Tillsonburg	5.5	22.50
Total	58.1	11,903.60

Forestry Services



Protecting existing forests and increasing forest cover is an important aspect of sustaining the watershed's health and biodiversity. The LPRCA's forest holdings total approximately 9,400 acres of which 20% (1,933 acres) are designated as Natural Heritage Woodlands. Authority forests continue to be managed under the direction of the 1999 Forest Management Plan, prepared for a twenty-year period, to ensure a sustainable supply of forest products; erosion control; wildlife habitat; recreation and natural heritage values.

- Timber contracts were awarded to selectively harvest 4 stands
- Awarded 3 fuelwood cut contracts
- Completed roadside fuelwood sale at Abigail Becker CA and salvage operation at Deer Creek CA due to wind storm damage
- Harvesting inspections were carried out on various stands within the watershed
- Tree marking was completed on 6 properties
- Cooperated with MNR to host silvicultural prescription course
- Provided assistance to Community Forest Manager's Annual Meeting
- Partnered with Norfolk County to complete gypsy moth survey in selected tracts
- Assisted research efforts in Backus Woods to update 1985 vegetation inventory by locating and GPS'ing 509 of the original 535 survey stakes and establishing vegetation plots for point-quarter sampling



Conservation Areas

Long Point Region Conservation Authority is perhaps best known for its five large, multi-use conservation areas – Backus Heritage (Port Rowan), Deer Creek (Langton), Haldimand (Selkirk), Norfolk (Port Ryerse) and Waterford North (Waterford). These properties provide venues for healthy and active lifestyles such as hiking, fishing, canoeing, swimming, camping and other recreational activities to residents and tourists alike.

2009 Highlights:

- Welcomed more than 290,800 visitors at five conservation areas
- LPRCA staff spent a great deal of time cleaning up fallen trees and debris and repairing damage at Deer Creek CA following a storm event in August
- Celebrated the 40th anniversary of Deer Creek CA
- Continued to draw crowd at Deer Creek CA children's fishing derby
- Partnered with Port Dover Yacht Club to offer sailing lessons at Norfolk CA
- More than 4,200 students participated in conservation and heritage education classes offered at Backus Heritage CA
- A private donation provided the opportunity to construct a gazebo at Backus Heritage Conservation Area
- Completed work to repair flume on the 1798 Backhouse Mill National Historic Site
- Upgraded campsite services at Backus and Deer Creek
- The War of 1812 Re-enactment at Backus was designated as a Crown Forces event and more than 550 re-enactors were hosted on site during the 20th anniversary presentation of this popular special event
- Received some 5900 hours of volunteer service at Backus Heritage CA
- Participated in Trails Open as part of a province-wide initiative between Conservation Ontario and the Ontario Heritage Trust with a fall colour hike in Backus Woods
- Awarded the Leighton & Betty Brown Conservation Scholarship to three graduating high school students



Corporate Services

Working together for a healthy watershed: LPRCA has a Board of Directors to guide the agency's conservation efforts. In 2009 there were 10 directors who were elected councillors or citizen appointees from the municipalities of the watershed. The Board provides direction on LPRCA's watershed management programs through support of its strategic plan. The directors also help advance the mission of the organization, as well as, oversee LPRCA's programs and services.

2009 Board of Directors

Chair, Councillor Buck Sloat
Haldimand County

Vice Chair, Councillor Ron Sackrider
Town of Tillsonburg & Township of South West Oxford

Councillor Leroy Bartlett
Haldimand County

Peter Black
Norfolk County

Larry Chanda
Norfolk County

Paul Ens
Municipality of Bayham & Township of Malahide

Councillor Roger Geysens
Norfolk County

Councillor John Hunt
Norfolk County

Councillor Sam Lamb
Town of Tillsonburg & Township of South West Oxford

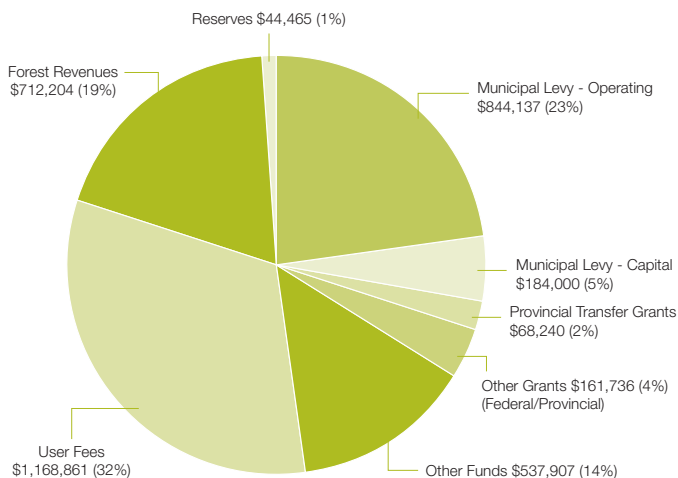
Councillor Pat Lee
County of Brant & Township of Norwich



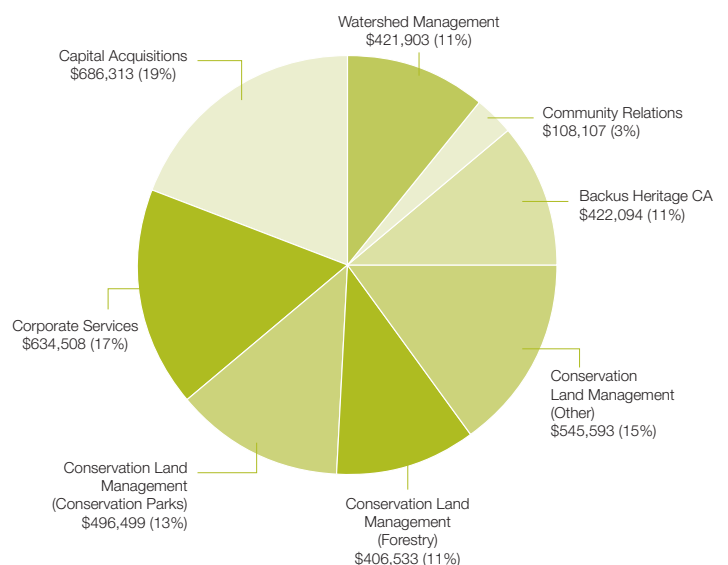
Standing left to right: Ron Sackrider, Buck Sloat, Peter Black, Roger Geysens, Larry Chanda, Pat Lee, John Hunt, Leroy Bartlett
Missing: Paul Ens, Sam Lamb

Financing Conservation

2009 Source of Funds \$3,721,550



2009 Expenditures \$3,721,550





Front & Back Cover Photo Credit: Kevin Babbey



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