



Long Point Region
Conservation Authority

Annual Report 2023



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Message from the Chair

2023 was a year of challenges, growth, transition and opportunities. While the legislative and regulatory environment around us is shifting, what has remained constant for LPRCA is our focus on fulfilling our responsibilities under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, promoting the well-being of our watershed and delivering exceptional services and experiences.

Over the past year as an organization, we have made considerable advancements towards delivering on our organizational objectives and in preparing for the new regulatory environment. I would like to recognize LPRCA's management team for their continued commitment and effort to the organization, in moving us forward through these changes and opportunities. LPRCA's management team and staff has shown that the Authority will remain committed to fulfilling our core objectives and continuing to deliver the value-added programs and services many of the residents in our watershed rely on.

As I announced my retirement in 2023, I would like to thank the past and present Board of Directors with whom I have had the opportunity to serve alongside; it has sincerely been a pleasure. With the combined efforts and dedication of the Board and our outstanding staff, the Authority has facilitated work that has made substantial impacts on our watershed that will live on for years to come.

I know the Authority is in good hands under the current Board and the leadership of Judy Maxwell, General Manager. The Authority has a promising future ahead.

John Scholten | Chair, LPRCA Board of Directors

Message from the General Manager

Reflecting on 2023, it was a year of significant accomplishments and changes within the watershed. Our committed staff worked together to deliver exceptional programs and services that enhanced the watershed and brought about many positive outcomes.

In 2023 many exciting projects commenced including, the Vittoria Dam Class Environmental Assessment, the Big Otter Creek Floodplain Mapping, the Riverine Flood Hydrology Watershed Model Study, and the completion of safety fencing at Lehman and Vittoria Dams.

Our planning staff issued 245 permits and the Flood Forecasting and Warning team issued 8 messages over 4 events. Within the watershed 29,150 trees were planted and 1,280 acres of cover crops were planted on private land. Two erosion control projects were funded and the control of invasive species was completed on 211 acres of wetland. The Authority participated in a province wide pilot project to monitor for potential infestation of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Over 1,500 acres of land was surveyed and/or treated for invasive species across 19 forest tracts. Conservation Area campgrounds were busy with 451 seasonal campers and over 7,400 overnight stays.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Board and staff for all of their efforts that led to achieving so many positive results in 2023. I hope you enjoy this annual report, where we highlight the above work and more that our LPRCA team accomplished.

Judy Maxwell | General Manager, LPRCA

Memorial Forest Dedication Service

Annually, a Memorial Forest Dedication Service is held at Backus Heritage Conservation Area where donors and families are invited to honour and remember loved ones by planting trees in their memory. This year we honoured 212 loved ones. In 2023, Vice Chair Michael Columbus took the podium to deliver a speech to attendees followed by musical performances from Brenda Atkinson and Becky Hollingsworth and a service from Rev. Dr. Richard Hollingsworth. The Memorial Forest is a living and growing forest planted at the entrance of Backus Heritage Conservation Area and is generously supported by memorial donations made to celebrate loved ones in a unique and everlasting way.



In Memoriam

Roger Geysens



It is with sadness that the Long Point Region Conservation Authority notes the passing of former Board of Directors member and Norfolk County Councillor, Roger Geysens. Roger sat on the Board for 17 years, three of which he served as Chair. Roger passed away peacefully in November of 2023 surrounded by his loved ones. Roger was a man of dedication who contributed his time and effort to the betterment of the community. He will be greatly missed.

Protecting Life & Property

Flood Forecasting

	2023	2022
Watershed Conditions Statements	5	6
Flood Watches	2	4
Flood Warnings	1	3

A significant mandate that LPRCA works to accomplish is protecting people and property from natural hazards. The Flood Forecasting and Warning program plays a vital role in doing so. LPRCA's Flood Forecasting and Warning team works on rotation 24/7/365, monitoring both lake and riverine conditions across the watershed to ensure flood-related messages are issued when necessary. If flood conditions are present, the team coordinates with municipal staff and notifies the public. In 2023, a total of eight flood-related messages were issued. Along with flood monitoring, LPRCA has a low-water response team that monitors groundwater levels. There were no advisories issued in 2023.

After four years of high static water levels in Lake Erie with all-time highs in 2019 and 2020, the lake levels have decreased significantly but still remain slightly above historical average levels. Lower lake levels decrease the frequency and likelihood of storm surge flooding, but ultimately does not eliminate the risk of flooding. High sustained winds will still cause flooding in coastal areas.



Vienna, April 2023

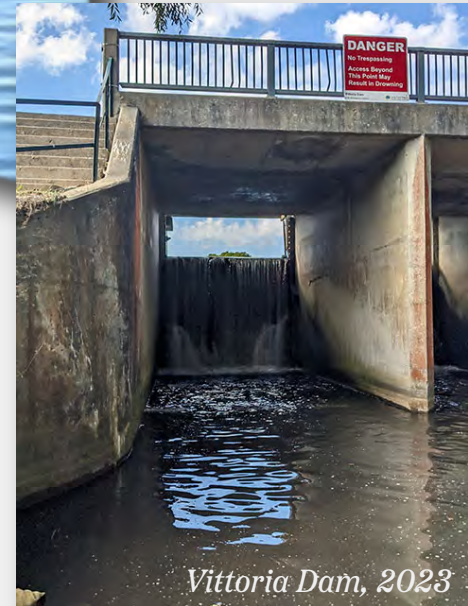
Source Water Protection

The *Clean Water Act* of 2006 designates Conservation Authorities as Source Protection Authorities to work with multi-stakeholders and Source Protection Committees to develop watershed-based plans for the protection of drinking water sources. Locally, the Lake Erie Source Protection Region includes the Long Point Region CA, Grand River CA, Catfish Creek CA and Kettle Creek CA watersheds. Each of these Conservation Authorities has its own source protection plan. The Long Point Region plan update will be submitted to the Ministry by December 15, 2024.

Vittoria Dam - Conservation Ontario Class Environmental Assessment

The Vittoria Dam was first constructed between 1805 and 1810 on Young's Creek near the town of Vittoria, Norfolk County, to power grist and sawmills. The dam was rebuilt several times over its history, most recently in 1965 by the Big Creek Region Conservation Authority. A Dam Safety Review completed in 2015 for LPRCA by engineering company, AECOM, identified the dam as a High Hazard Dam based on capacity and structural issues that could affect public safety and the sensitive cold-water environment.

A Conservation Ontario Class Environmental Assessment is currently being conducted by Matrix Solutions Inc. to evaluate options for repair, replacement or decommissioning, to address the capacity and structural issues. The ongoing assessment will be completed in 2024.



Vittoria Dam, 2023



Vittoria Dam, 2023



Vittoria Dam, 2023

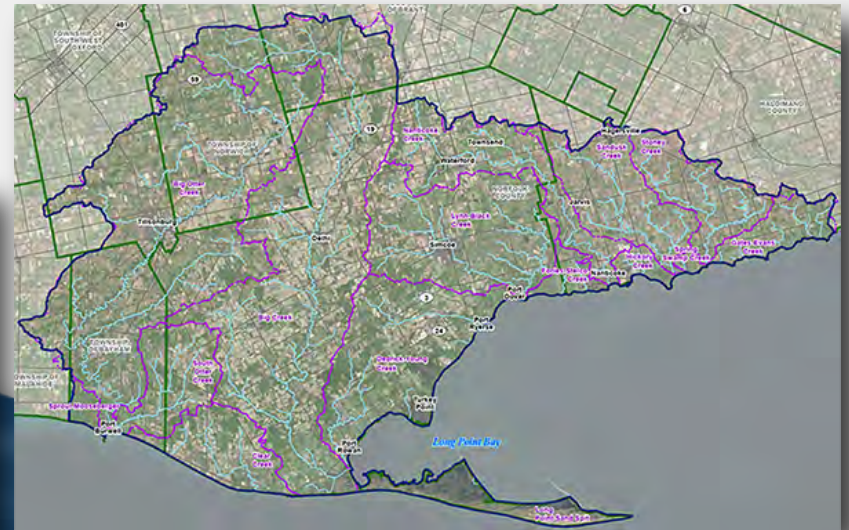
Lehman Dam and Vittoria Dam Fencing Projects

Safety fencing was installed at the Lehman and Vittoria Dams in 2023 with matched funding provided through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) Fund.



Riverine Flood Hydrology Watershed Model

An upgrade to LPRCA's hydrology model was made possible under the new Federal Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP). The hydrology model will be a HEC-HMS hydrologic model and will simulate the complete hydrologic process within the entire 2,782 square kilometer watershed. The new model will provide input to flood hazard mapping and improve flood forecasting and warning and enable future floodplain mapping. The project is set to be completed in 2024.

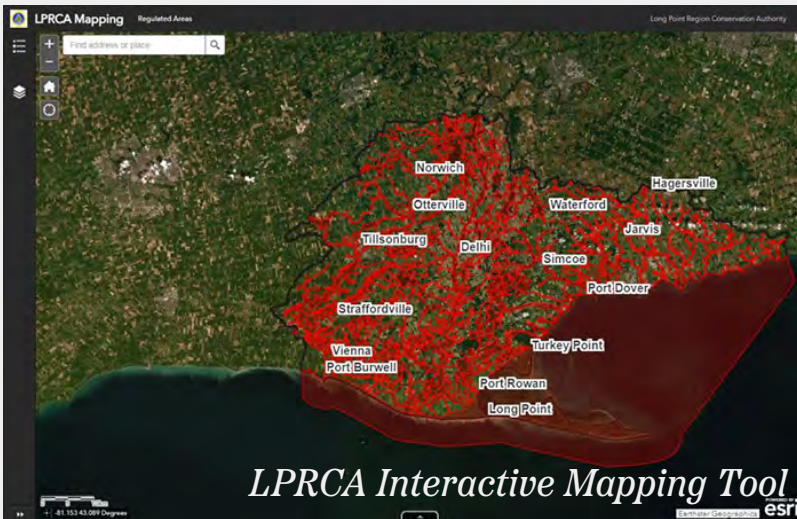


Planning & Regulations

Guided by the *Planning Act*, *Conservation Authorities Act* and *Ontario Regulation 178/06*, LPRCA's planning team works to regulate development in floodplains and hazardous areas within our watershed and member municipalities to prevent the loss of life and property damage caused by natural hazards such as flooding and erosion.

In 2023, LPRCA issued 245 permits while continuing to decrease average permit turnaround times. The average turnaround time for minor applications was 3 days, compared to 4.2 days in 2022. In 2023, the average turnaround time for major applications was 3.7 days, compared to 4.9 days in 2022.

	2023	2022
Permit Applications Issued	245	278
Municipal Applications Reviewed	117	160
Pre-consultation Meetings	32	56



Big Otter Creek Mapping Project

In partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) – Lake Erie Management Unit, LPRCA undertook new floodplain mapping for Big Otter Creek between Tillsonburg and Calton Line in Bayham. The new floodplain mapping will support LPRCA's flood forecasting and warning for downstream Vienna and Port Burwell while aiding the MNRF with fish spawning habitat data.

Enhancing Watershed Health

Stewardship

LPRCA is proud to offer a number of landowner services to residents in the Long Point Region Watershed that help to preserve and enhance the natural environment within it. These services include tree planting, restoration projects, erosion control plans and rural water quality projects that all have numerous benefits for our watershed ranging from limiting nutrient runoff to restoring the watershed's natural hydrology.

In 2023, LPRCA facilitated the planting of 29,150 trees under Forest Ontario's 50 Million Program, Ontario Power Generation's (OPG) Regional Biodiversity Program and the Municipal Trees for Roads Program. With funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada's Integrated Conservation Action Plan (ECCC/ICAP), (coordinated by Norfolk ALUS), 1,280 acres of cover crops were planted in partnership with 13 agricultural producers. In addition to cover crop funding, ECCC/ICAP helps fund LPRCA's erosion control project along with Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) funding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (coordinated by Kettle Creek Conservation Authority) and the Elgin Clean Water Program funded by Elgin County. LPRCA staff designed four erosion control projects and two were funded and completed.



In 2023, OPG's Regional Biodiversity Program funding supported the control of *Phragmites australis*, Common Buckthorn, European Black Alder and other invasive species on 211 acres of land at the Lee Brown Marsh and Dereham Wetlands.

Invasive Species Control

Managing invasive species is crucial to maintaining the health of the native species found within our forest tracts. In the summer of 2023, LPRCA participated in a province wide pilot research program project organized by the Invasive Species Centre, Natural Resources Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to monitor for potential infestation of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA). Installation of DNA traps were set up at the Jacques Tract in Haldimand County to look for traces of HWA. LPRCA traps initially came back negative for HWA, but in the fall of 2023 CFIA reported a positive case in Haldimand County on private lands. Forestry staff then identified HWA in the Haldimand Conservation Area. CFIA confirmed it as a positive case. On-going monitoring and treatment plans for infected trees on our lands and on neighbouring properties with infected Hemlocks are in the works for 2024.



Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA)



Invasive Species Spraying Treatment

LPRCA forestry staff continue to survey and treat forest tracts for invasive species with funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada in partnership with the Long Point Basin Land Trust. In 2023, over 1,500 acres of land was surveyed and/or treated for invasive species across 19 LPRCA properties to control/eliminate invasive species. Forestry staff will continue to monitor for new up and coming invasive species that threaten the watershed, such as Oak Wilt.

Forest Management

LPRCA owns over 11,000 acres of land, with a total of 90 forest tracts. Over 7,500 acres are managed forests enrolled in the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program and 2,500 acres of land are enrolled in the Conservation Lands Tax Incentive Program. LPRCA also has over 1,145 acres of land that are protected and classified as Natural Heritage Woodlands. LPRCA focuses on ecologically sustainable forest management with attention to social, economic and ecological values to ensure the Authority can continue its legacy of well-managed forests using good forestry practices. Long Point Region Conservation Authority achieved Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) Forest Management Certification in December 2014 through the Eastern Ontario Model Forest's FSC Group Forest Management Certificate (FSC® C018800). Certified forests follow a set of internationally recognized forest management standards that verify the forest is being managed to conserve biological diversity, benefit local people and industry, and ensure economic viability.

In the 2023 field season, 590 acres on four forest tracts were surveyed by a qualified ecologist to identify Species at Risk and Species of Concern. As per the *Endangered Species Act*, this was done to help protect those species and their habitats during harvesting operations. A total of four properties were tendered for harvesting in 2023, totalling just over 163 acres.



Harvesting Operations



Species at Risk - American Chestnut

Water Quality Monitoring

Since 2002, LPRCA has monitored surface and ground water quality in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, with partners such as the Provincial (Stream) Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN), Provincial Ground Monitoring Network (PGMN) and Ontario Benthos Bio-monitoring Network (OBBN). In 2023, samples were collected for PWQMN and for PGMN. Surface water samples are collected eight times a year at ten locations found throughout the watershed and are analyzed for various parameters including chloride, nutrients and metals. Ground water samples are collected annually from 11 sampling wells.

LPRCA's stream monitoring program collects samples for the mandatory provincial programs, but also includes data collection for stream temperature monitoring from 14 sites and benthic invertebrate sampling from 12 sites. The data provides input to dam operations, low water response, permitting, drain maintenance, environmental assessments and stream restoration activities.



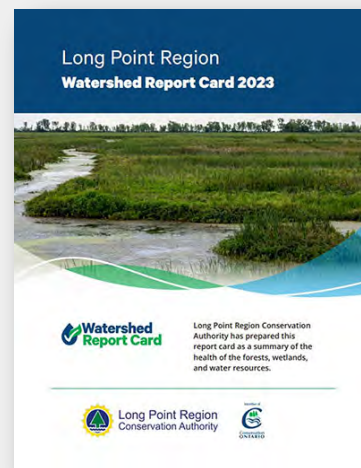
Benthic Invertebrate Samples



Water Sample Collection

Watershed Report Card

Conservation Authorities produce a Watershed Report Card (WRC) every five years reporting on the health of the forests, wetlands, and water resources within a watershed. Using Conservation Ontario guidelines and standards, LPRCA produced the 2023 Watershed Report Card based on data from 2017-2021, with the exception of groundwater which uses up to 20 years of available data. The WRC identifies grades for a standard set of environmental indicators. LPRCA's full Watershed Report Card can be found on our website, www.lprca.on.ca



With information gathered in the WRC, LPRCA staff can address what the current issues are and what next steps are needed to improve the health of the watershed. The WRC engages the community by translating the science into a tangible format, familiarizes people with LPRCA's role in watershed health and key issues and highlights measures that can be taken by the public to contribute to the watershed's overall health.

Connecting People to Nature

Backhouse Historic Site

2023 saw the Backhouse Historic Site, located in Backus Heritage Conservation Area, reopen with guided tours, period demonstrations and other activities led by interpreters.

Additional upgrades were made to buildings in the Backhouse Historic Site. Notably, the community hall building porch was completely refurbished.



*Community Hall Porch
Replacement at Backus Heritage CA*

Education Programming

For the first complete year of programming since 2019, over 2,000 students participated in interactive heritage and outdoor education programming at Backus Heritage Conservation Area.



Outdoor Education Programming



Heritage Programming



Heritage Education Programming

Conservation Areas & Land Holdings



2023 brought a busy camping season across LPRCA's five campgrounds, with 451 seasonal campsites booked, compared to 441 in 2022. Along with the seasonal campsites, there were a staggering 7,422 overnight stays throughout the season. LPRCA successfully piloted a self-check-in process with the Authority's camping reservation system, CAMIS.

New Trailhead Sign at Backus Heritage CA



*Removal of Hazard Trees at
Haldimand CA*



*Long Point Fish & Game Club, one of two
donated fishing docks at Deer Creek CA*



Norfolk CA



*Second well added to
Waterford North CA*

Children's Fishing Derbies

The annual event that embraces the playfulness of being a child while participating in friendly competition—the 2023 Deer Creek Children's Fishing Derby was a reel-ly fun day for the whole family! There were 98 children in attendance who got to embrace the joy of fishing during the August heat.



Big Catch at the 2023 Derby



Staff at the 2023 Watershed Tour



LPRCA 2023 Watershed Tour

In the fall of 2023, LPRCA staff and Board members participated in a tour of the watershed. This tour provides an opportunity to view properties, facilities, research stations and campgrounds demonstrating work done by staff. During this tour, attendees visited several sites including, Deer Creek Conservation Area and the Deer Creek Dam, the Port Rowan Lake Erie Gauge, Backus Heritage Conservation Area and the Backus Weather Station, the McMaster University Research Tower at the Wilson Tract, the Gage Tract, Waterford North Conservation Area, Vittoria Dam and sites where erosion control projects and invasive species projects had taken place. At the different locations, LPRCA staff presented information on ongoing projects and touched on the background of each destination.



Leighton & Betty Brown Scholarship

Empowering and educating the youth of today to better our tomorrow is essential to protect, restore and maintain the health of our watershed. The scholarship recognizes graduating high school students who have achieved academic excellence and have distinguished themselves in extracurricular activities, environmental community service and volunteer activities. The Lee Brown Marsh Management Committee was pleased to award two \$1,000 scholarships to Hannah Irvine and Adriaan van Hoeve due to their passion for the environment. The scholarship will support their post-secondary education journey in environmental and conservation education.



Conservation Stewardship Award

LPRCA is pleased to present the annual Conservation Stewardship Award to Kyle Hiebert of Hiebert Farms in Port Rowan, ON. Kyle was nominated by members of ALUS Norfolk and is commended for his passion for conservation education, woodlot management, reforestation and wetland conservation. Kyle is an active advocate in his community as a member of ALUS Norfolk's Partnership Advisory Committee. Kyle has participated in tree planting and wetland construction projects with LPRCA and through other partnerships. With his continued conservation advocacy, efforts and commitments, Kyle is well deserving of the Long Point Region Conservation Stewardship Award.

Meet the Authority

Long Point Region Conservation Authority is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario that shares a common goal of protecting people and property from natural hazards.

LPRCA is a special-purpose environmental body that works in partnership with our eight-member municipalities, the provincial and federal governments, and the community to protect, restore and manage the natural heritage in the Long Point Watershed.

2023 LPRCA Staff

Judy Maxwell General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer
Ben Hodi Manager of Watershed Services
Aaron Le Duc Manager of Corporate Services

Kim Brown Marsh Manager
Paige Burke Accounting Clerk
Greg Butcher Grounds Maintenance
Jeff Calliau Carpenter
Bob Dewdney Marsh Operations Labourer
Meagan Doan Resource Planner
Evan Forbes Supervisor Haldimand CA & Parks
Promotion Associate
Paul Gagnon Lands & Waters Supervisor
Brandon Good Superintendent of Conservation Areas
Brock Hussey Lands & Waters Technician
Isabel Johnson Resource Planner
Amanda Kaye Accounting Clerk
Ryan Kindt Workshop Technician

Leigh-Anne Mauthe Interim Manager of Watershed Services
Lorrie Minshall Project Manager, Watershed Services
Saifur Rahman Manager of Engineering & Infrastructure

Jessica King Marketing & Social Media Associate
Dana McLachlan Executive Assistant
Barry Norman Workshop Operations Labourer
Sarah Pointer Curator
David Proracki Water Resources Analyst
Chris Reinhart Forestry Technician
Darell Rohrer Workshop Operations Labourer
Frank Schram Workshop Supervisor
Jeffery Smithson Workshop Operations Labourer
Nicole Sullivan HR Associate/Receptionist
Debbie Thain Supervisor of Forestry
Sarah Willson Project Support



As well as our many seasonal staff and summer students.

2023 Board of Directors

Chair

John Scholten

Vice Chair

Michael Columbus

Directors

Shelley Ann Bentley	Haldimand County
Dave Beres	Town of Tillsonburg
Doug Brunton	Norfolk County
Robert Chambers	County of Brant
Tom Masschaele	Norfolk County
Stewart Patterson	Haldimand County
Chris Van Paassen	Norfolk County
Rainey Weisler	Municipality of Bayham/ Township of Malahide
Peter Ypma	Township of South-West Oxford

Backus Museum Committee

Betty Chanyi, Chair
Daves Beres
Michael Columbus
Dene Elligson
Tom Masschaele
John Scholten
Heather Smith
Julie Stone
Madaline Wilson

Lee Brown Marsh Management Committee

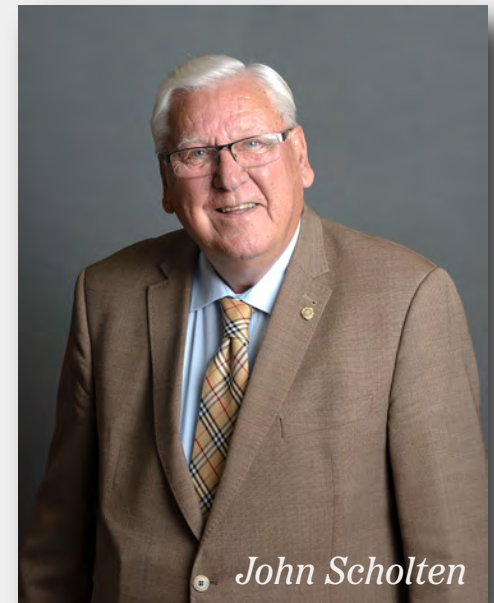
Tom Haskett, Chair
Larry Chanda
Michael Columbus
Lou Kociuk
John Scholten

A Fond Farewell

Since 2014, John Scholten has been on the Board of Directors for Long Point Region Conservation Authority, serving as Chair for two years and as Vice-Chair for five years. During his nine years on the Board, he also sat on a several standing committees and a number of ad hoc committees. John played a significant role in the Authority's successes and committed himself to his various positions. He was appointed to the Board by Oxford County, representing the Township of Norwich. John announced his retirement from the Board alongside his retirement from his position serving as a Norwich Councillor.

The LPRCA Board and staff thank John for his dedicated service and wish him a happy retirement.

Thank you John, enjoy your retirement.



John Scholten

Facts & Figures

Financial Highlights

2023 Revenue

Municipal Levy - Operating	\$ 2,099,510	33%
Municipal Levy - Capital	\$ 150,000	2%
Provincial Funding	\$ 35,229	1%
Fees	\$ 3,522,981	56%
Forestry	\$ 499,788	8%
Gain on Sale of Assets	\$ 11,271	0%
Total	\$ 6,318,779	100%

2023 Expenditures

Planning and Watershed Services	\$ 1,092,552	21%
Backus Heritage CA	\$ 317,138	6%
Maintenance Operations Services	\$ 778,254	15%
Forestry Services	\$ 412,513	7%
Conservation Parks	\$ 1,410,308	26%
Corporate Services	\$ 1,305,091	25%
Total	\$ 5,315,856	100%

Use of 2023 Operating Levy

Corporate Services	\$ 856,977	36%
Planning and Watershed Services	\$ 613,521	29%
Backus Heritage CA	\$ 150,426	5%
Maintenance Operations Services	\$ 628,586	30%
Total	\$ 2,249,510	100%

Share of 2023 Operating Levy

Haldimand County	\$ 324,284	14%
Norfolk County	\$ 1,165,865	52%
Oxford County	\$ 484,196	22%
Brant County	\$ 157,605	7%
Bayham Municipality	\$ 101,215	4%
Malahide Township	\$ 16,345	1%
Total	\$ 2,249,510	100%

Quick Facts

The watershed is **2,782 km²** with **99,098** population in the watershed, **225 km** of Lake Erie Shoreline, **13** water-control structures, **5** campgrounds, **600 +** campsites, **7,500 acres** managed forest tract, **1,145 acres** natural heritage woodland, **800 acres** uplands and marsh & **11,000 acres** of land.



Long Point Region Conservation Authority

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Member of the
Conservation Ontario Network



@lpr_ca



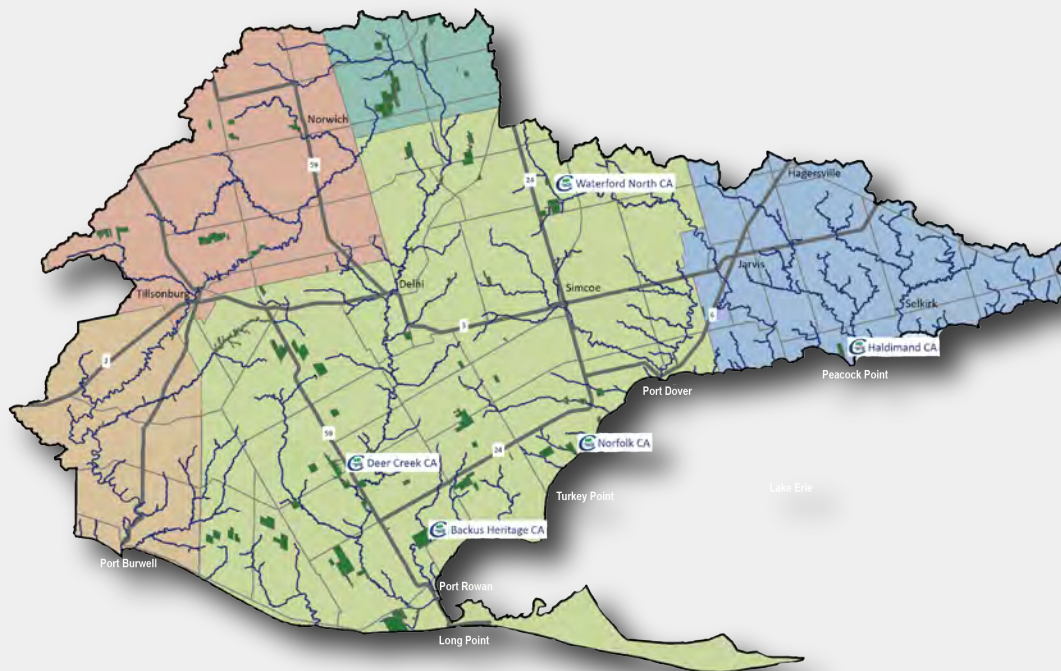
@LongPointConservation



@longpointca



@lprca



Thank you to our municipal partners

Municipality of Bayham | County of Brant | Haldimand County
Township of Malahide | Norfolk County | Township of Norwich
Township of South West Oxford | Town of Tillsonburg