

OUR WATERSHED 2009 ANNUAL REPORT



Message from the General Manager



In 2010, Lower Trent Conservation will place significant new effort on public and landowner engagement in order to increase on-the-ground conservation efforts. This increased effort will involve more one on one consultation, workshops and improved access to resource materials.

The education and outreach activities of the Authority will include an expanded Children's Water Festival, and a redesigned website to provide better access to the information and services of Lower Trent Conservation. We will increase our presence with schools and community groups through direct visits and distribution of resource materials.

The drinking water source protection program will reach another milestone in 2010 with the completion of the assessment report concerning the sources of water for the municipal water systems in the watershed. The assessment report provides the basis for the formulation of the source protection plans for these systems.

In 2010, Lower Trent Conservation will continue its long tradition of strengthening existing partnerships and building new ones. We look forward to continuing the journey with you towards maintaining a healthy watershed.

Jim Kelleher

Protecting Drinking Water at the Source

Under the umbrella of the Trent Conservation Coalition (TCC), Lower Trent Conservation has partnered with four other conservation authorities across the Trent/Ganaraska River watersheds (Crowe, Valley, Ganaraska Region, Kawartha Region and Otonabee Conservation Authorities) to assist with the development of source protection plans in conjunction with local municipalities.

The first phase of the source protection process was completed with the approval of the Terms of Reference (TOR) documents by the Ministry of the Environment in January 2009. The development of the TOR details the work plan and budget for the preparation of assessment reports and source protection plans.

Technical studies on the 54 municipal drinking water systems within the TCC Source Protection Region continued throughout 2009. This scientific research will provide the basis for the assessment reports which will identify and assess threats to the quantity and quality of drinking water sources. A series of nine open houses were held throughout the Source Protection Region during Summer/Fall 2009 for individuals to view and comment on preliminary maps of vulnerable areas.

The multi-stakeholder, 28-member Source Protection Committee met 12 times in 2009 as they continued to review and approve technical documents and guide the preparation of the assessment reports.



Kris Vande Sompel

COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Education and outreach are critically important to engaging residents in environmentally sustainable behaviours and drawing attention to conservation issues. Special events, workshops, volunteer activities, displays, new media and website development, press releases and publications are some of the initiatives that provide opportunities for everyone to learn about the importance of environmental protection and stewardship of the Lower Trent watershed region. Lower Trent Conservation also recognizes that the students of today are the environmental stewards of tomorrow. Through a variety of educational activities, young people are educated about the importance of our natural environment.

Highlights-----

Issued 13 press releases highlighting program areas, special events, and more.

160 children discovered nature all summer long at the Goodrich-Loomis Nature Camp held at Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area.

Promoted the Authority at 14 trade shows and special events.

The first Quinte Children's Water Festival was held at Centennial Park in Trenton. The curriculum based event saw close to 300 local grade 3-5 students learn about water conservation, science, and attitudes through a variety of interactive hands-on activity stations operated by volunteers and high school students.



Several interactive presentations given to local schools and youth groups regarding water conservation.

— 56 Volunteers dedicated over 860 hours to assist LTC with a variety of projects.



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY SERVICE

Lower Trent Conservation 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.

Many development activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines and waterways can damage the environment or pose a threat to public safety. Provincial policies, and provincial and federal legislation are in place to help control such activities. Lower Trent Conservation offers advice to municipalities, landowners and developers to help them meet provincial policy requirements and to ensure compliance with government legislation. These services also ensure environmental integrity and protect people and property from flooding and erosion hazards.

Long-term strategies, including watershed plans, natural heritage strategies and shoreline management plans, also help guide land use and resource management decisions.

Highlights-----

Reviewed 140 municipal planning applications and two Aggregate Resource Act applications for environmental concerns.

Sampled benthic invertebrates at 43 stream sites. These are insects that live in the bottom of streams, and are indicators of water quality.

Check Your Watershed Day held July 18 - a one day event where 36 volunteers monitored stream flow, depth, and width at 219 stream crossings along cold creek.

36 surface water quality samples taken and analyzed at nine locations for several different parameters in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment.

Maintained 11 groundwater monitoring wells which provide data on groundwater quantity and quality.



Assisted with the source protection planning process including preparation of a watershed characterization report, and provided assistance for the Tier 2 water budgets for the Lower Trent watershed region.

Worked with planning departments for each member municipality to evaluate the level of customer service provided specifically within the Planning and Regulations Program.

Need a permit?

If your property is adjacent to a river or valley system, wetland, significant natural feature or the Lake Ontario/Bay of Quinte shoreline, you must receive written permission from Lower Trent Conservation before initiating certain types of work.

FLOOD PROTECTION SERVICE

Lower Trent Conservation provides a flood protection service to local municipalities and the general public to reduce the risk of property damage and loss of life from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion.

Ten water control structures including a dam, flood walls, berms, weirs and overflow channels help to protect existing development from potential flood damages. Ongoing inspection and maintenance ensure these structures continue to function as designed.

Water and flow levels along the region's waterways and weather forecasts are monitored daily as part of a flood forecasting and warning system intended to provide the earliest possible notification to municipalities and the public of the potential for flooding.

Regulation of construction activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines and waterways ensure that activities in these areas will not result in a risk to public safety or property damage. This preventative approach also ensures that wetlands, shorelines and waterways are protected.

Highlights-----

Issued 122 permits for development activities adjacent to wetlands, watercourses, and shorelines.

New staff gauge installed at the Hamlet of Trent River to monitor water levels during high-water situations between the Village of Hastings and — the Hamlet of Trent River.

Baseflow monitoring concentrated on five subwatersheds including Salem, Smithfield, Barnum House, and Glen Miller Creeks and the Rice Lake tributaries for a total of 150 monitoring sites.

22 flood messages issued throughout the year, including 10 during a significant spring flood event along the Trent River.

Properties located in flood prone areas along the Trent River surveyed to assess potential damages from future flooding in conjunction with the Municipality of Trent Hills and the City of Quinte West. —

Three violations issued for development activities adjacent to wetlands, watercourses, and shorelines.

Operated and maintained nine stream gauge stations as part of the flood forecasting and warning system. —



CONSERVATION LANDS

Lower Trent Conservation owns 3800 acres of natural open space. These forests, valleys, meadows and wetlands form part of a regional system of protected landscapes that depict the natural diversity of the region. They are special places in the watershed that are protected from development, where the natural world comes first.

There are 17 properties in total that range in size from small parkettes to over 650 hectares. Ten properties are classified as Conservation Areas and provide venues for healthy and active lifestyles such as hiking, bicycling, fishing, canoeing and other recreational activities to residents and tourists alike. Seven Natural Habitat Areas, while open to the public, are left in a natural state with no maintained trails or recreational facilities. 🌳

Highlights-----

Bleasdell Boulder Conservation Area improvements included a parking lot re-alignment, and trail improvements, including a new link to the Lower Trent Trail.

Sager Conservation Area received a new kiosk. The deteriorated 33 year old lookout tower was removed to make way for a new tower in 2010.

Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area savannah restoration continued with removal of non-native species and planting bed maintenance.

Field surveys continued for Species at Risk at Keating-Hoards Natural Habitat Area.

Trees planted for regeneration purposes at Keating Hoards Natural Habitat Area.

Close to 100 participants attended the annual Seymour Family Fishing Day held at Seymour Conservation Area.

New trail bridge constructed at Proctor Park Conservation Area in Brighton.



WATERSHED RESTORATION

While Lower Trent Conservation believes that prevention is the most cost-effective method of protecting and enhancing the many natural features of our watershed region, there is still a role to play in restoration efforts. By establishing partnerships with other agencies, technical and some financial assistance is available to private, public and corporate landowners, community groups and individual residents for practices that enhance, restore or protect their properties. Restoration activities allow for a hands-on approach to watershed protection. 

Highlights-----

Sold over 23,000 tree seedlings to residents as part of the Tree Seedling Stock Program.

300 free butternut tree seedlings given away to interested residents as part of the Butternut Recovery Program.

Through the Caring for the Moraine Project, landowners on the Oak Ridges Moraine planted 6000 native trees & 1250 prairie plugs, fenced livestock from 0.4 km of Percy Creek and removed invasive species from 6 ha of remnant prairie. 38 site visits and four workshops were delivered to landowners on the Moraine.

Lead a partnership between nine environmental organizations and individuals to protect Species at Risk in the lower Trent River.

Promoted the Greencover Canada program in cooperation with the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association available through the Environmental Farm Plan.

The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan and its partners monitored birds, frog/toads, fish, aquatic invertebrates, water chemistry and vegetation in 15 coastal wetlands in the Bay of Quinte. Developed and implemented new programs to help rehabilitate the Bay and hosted numerous workshops and presentations to educate people on the importance of a Healthy Bay • Healthy Community.

Partnered with OFAH to address the Water Soldier outbreak, an invasive species threat discovered in the Trent River in 2009.

463 landowners contacted & six site visits conducted for the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. Financial assistance provided for four projects including two well & two septic upgrades.



Kris Vande Sompel



Need more information?

We are always here to help you and provide you with information regarding any of our programs and services. A copy of the Audited Financial Statement is also available upon request.

Our mission is to deliver conservation services to protect and manage our local environment. Fulfilling our mission requires coordinated planning, communication with others, and cooperative action.



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