

Lower Trent Conservation

2012 Annual Report





Glenda Rodgers, CAO



Craig Kerr, Chair

Message from the CAO & Chair

Our 2012 Annual Report provides a glimpse at the work Lower Trent Conservation does to make our watershed a better place to live. Lower Trent Conservation's programs are aimed at healthy watersheds which are a prerequisite for healthy communities.

As you read about our 2012 accomplishments, we challenge you to think about the programs the Conservation Authority delivers – planning and regulations, maintaining conservation areas, flood-

forecasting and warning, stewardship, or education and outreach – and how they contribute to human health and the local economy.

Our Conservation Areas provide places to walk and enjoy nature - did you know that doctors are starting to prescribe a walk in the woods to improve health? Planning and regulations helps to protect property from natural hazards and potential economic loss. Protecting wetlands, planting trees and naturalizing shorelines helps protect our

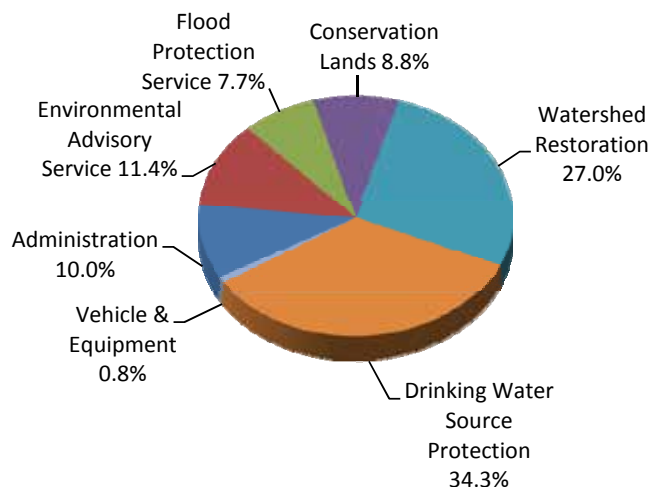
precious water resources while providing wildlife habitat. And education and outreach activities encourage people to take positive actions on a number of fronts.

Lower Trent Conservation works with many partners, coordinating the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Program and local implementation of the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan. The source protection program is aimed at ensuring clean water to drink for local communities. The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan is focussed on cleaning up the Bay, and restoring the beneficial uses that were degraded due to past activities and practices.

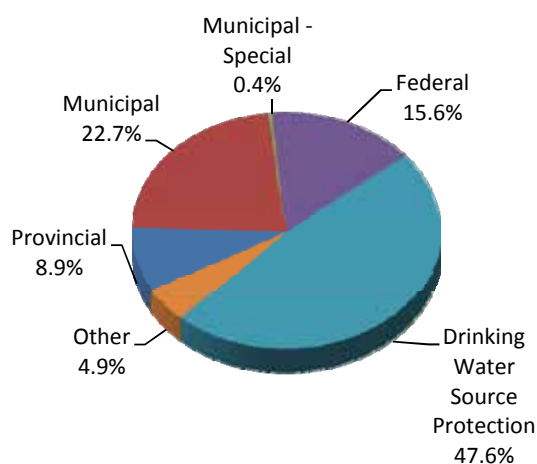
We are proud of the work that our Board of Directors and staff accomplished in 2012 with the help of watershed municipalities, the provincial and federal government, volunteers, and other partners. We hope that this report inspires you to learn more about our conservation programs and to take environmental action – for healthier watersheds, healthier communities and a healthier you!

2012 Financial Summary

Expenditures - \$3,221,669



Revenue - \$3,221,669



Audited financial statements are available upon request.

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 provide opportunities for everyone to learn about 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

A total of \$9,000 in cash prizes was awarded in the Caring for our Watersheds™ competition, an international contest of Agrium Inc; over 75 Grade 8 and 9 students from the Campbellford and Brighton areas participated.

Agrium Inc. provided funding to implement 3 Caring for our Watersheds™ projects.

Provided 7 presentations to 84 children at the Batawa Ski Hill and Quinte West YMCA summer day camps.

Developed interactive Conservation Area trail maps for website.

Seventeen press releases, 12 blogs and 25 E-News plus numerous tweets and Facebook updates.

Conservation Area brochures and information kiosk displays updated.

Provided various interactive presentations to local schools and youth groups regarding soil and water conservation.

Fourth annual Quinte Children's Water Festival held at Batawa Ski Hill in May with 950 Grade 3-5 students learning about water conservation, protection and science.



Quinte Children's Water Festival

Over 150 volunteers contributed over 250 hours to assist with habitat restoration projects and environmental education events.

Invasive species outreach at 12 events in conjunction with Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters.

Hosted hikes for Brighton Applefest at Proctor Park Conservation Area and Willow Beach Field Naturalists at Seymour Conservation Area.

Trails Open events held in conjunction with Quinte West Doors Open; 135 people participated at Sager and Bleasdel Boulder Conservation Areas.

Thirty people participated in a "Take a Walk on the Wild Side" hike along Butler Creek followed by a stewardship workshop.

Over 850 people visited the conservation exhibit at the annual Hastings County Plowing Match & Farm Show.

Participated in 8 trade shows and special events.

Environmental Advisory

Lower Trent Conservation provides information and advice to municipalities and the watershed community on a wide range of environmental issues.

Development activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines and waterways can damage the environment or pose a threat to public safety. 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.

Monitoring activities focus on collecting data for provincial water monitoring programs. The data is used to evaluate and report on existing conditions within the watershed and helps to establish targets for protection and rehabilitation.

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

Highlights

Reviewed and provided advice and written comments to local municipalities on 149 *Planning Act* applications.

Over 2500 interactions with the public seeking environmental information/advice (including emails, phone calls, meetings, office visits, etc.).

Completed data analysis and map production for the Watershed Report Card.

Sampled benthic invertebrates at 46 stream sites; these insects live in the bottom of streams and are indicators of water quality.

Completed environmental review for 17 legal requests and 55 general development inquiries.

Collected 54 surface water quality samples from nine monitoring sites for the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network.

11 Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network sites sampled; ongoing maintenance, data downloads and daily water levels measured.

Completed second of a five year water chemistry/benthic sampling program at 10 sites as part of the Provincial Bio-Criteria Project; data will help to describe normal ranges of biological condition in streams across southern Ontario.

Analyses of thermal water characteristics of 13 monitored streams; 27 temperature probes installed.



Summer student collects macroinvertebrates

Flood Protection

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.

Weather forecasts and water conditions along the region's waterways 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 ensures 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

Revised flood messaging to align with new Provincial standards; 3 water level notices issued throughout the year.

Issued 151 permits for development activities adjacent to wetlands, watercourses, and shorelines under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (Ontario Regulation 163/06 Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses); issued nine violation notices.

Operated and maintained 9 stream gauge stations as part of flood forecasting and warning system; mild winter resulted in only four snow surveys at four snow sampling sites.

Baseflow (flow of water entering stream channels generally from groundwater sources) monitored at 52 sites throughout the region.

Data collection and analysis for Ontario Low Water Response Program; experienced Level 1 Low Water conditions in June/July and Level 2 conditions in August/September.

Annual inspection of 10 flood control structures; operation of Warkworth Dam; repairs to gabion wall in Stirling.



Low Water conditions at King's Mill CA

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 the natural habitat features on their properties.

Highlights

Completed second year of Healthy Shorelines – Clean Water Stewardship Program with RBC Blue Water Project funding; developed promotional materials; completed shoreline demonstration projects at Warkworth and Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Areas; conducted 22 property visits; awarded 4 grants to landowners for shoreline plantings; attended 6 events to promote program; received private donation to support additional grants.

Distributed \$32,019 in funding from the Ministry of the Environment to 5 participants for a septic system upgrade, septic replacement, fencing & alternative watering project and manure containment project as part of the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program.

Coordinated and assisted with the first phase of planting a shoreline buffer at Hastings Marina; implemented as a Caring for our Watersheds™ project.

13,500 tree seedlings sold to watershed residents as part of the Tree Seedling Stock Program.



Invasive species removal at Butler Creek

Partnered with Community Stream Stewards on two projects: Cold Creek Watershed Tour and production of interpretive signs for Butler Creek in Brighton.

Conservation Lands

Lower Trent Conservation owns 1540 hectares 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. Seven Natural Habitat Areas, while open to the public, are left in a natural state with no maintained trails or recreational facilities.

Highlights

Twenty-two Dogs on Leash Challenge events held throughout the summer to educate dog owners about the problems associated with dogs being off leash; installed additional signage.

Geocaching activities developed for various properties; user guidelines approved.

Conservation Lands Strategy completed; provides policies and priorities for the Conservation Lands program.

Four interpretive panels produced for the lookout tower at Sager Conservation Area to educate the public about some of the natural and cultural features of the area.

9th annual Seymour Family Fishing Day held at Seymour Conservation Area.

Final site clean-up of former Puddephatt property at Murray Marsh Natural Habitat Area; memorial stone unveiled at a dedication event in memory of Charlie Puddephatt, a lifelong resident of the marsh.



Various improvements including entrance kiosk at Proctor Park Conservation Area, painted footbridge at Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area, fencing at Keating-Hoards Natural Habitat Area and bridge improvements at Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area.

Special group functions at various Conservation Areas including group picnics, a wedding, corporate meeting, school cross-country meets, and a CFB Trenton training exercise.

Planted 2,000 native grasses at Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area as part of prairie habitat restoration.

Seventy people attended two "Movies in the Park" events at Proctor Park Conservation Area.

Drinking Water Source Protection

Lower Trent Conservation (LTC) continued the partnership with four other conservation authorities (Crowe Valley, Ganaraska Region, Kawartha and Otonabee) across the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region in 2012. As lead conservation authority, LTC continued its coordinating role, providing technical, communications and administrative support to the Source Protection Committee.

A significant step in the source protection planning process was taken in 2012. The Proposed Trent and Ganaraska Source Protection Plans were submitted to the Ministry of the Environment on August 17, 2012 for their consideration and approval. The plans represent the result of six years of research, data collection, and extensive consultation and collaboration with local government, potentially-affected stakeholders, and the general public. Six public meetings and two comment periods took place between April and July.

The source protection plans will help protect the water sources for 53 municipal drinking water systems across the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region. The documents detail actions and guidance for municipalities and others to help ensure residents and businesses continue to have access to plentiful, clean water today and into the future.

www.trentsourceprotection.on.ca

Learning from Walkerton

The water tragedy at Walkerton in 2000 has shown the importance of protecting sources of municipal drinking water. Seven people died and thousands became ill when bacteria polluted a municipal well.

In 2006, the Ontario Government passed the *Clean Water Act* to protect the rivers, lakes and groundwater that are sources of drinking water for municipalities. Under the *Act*, Source Protection Plans are being developed to provide an additional level of protection to municipal drinking water supplies.

DRINKING WATER
SOURCE PROTECTION
ACT FOR CLEAN WATER



Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

The Bay of Quinte is a healthy and vibrant ecosystem that must be protected for future generations. Lower Trent Conservation co-chairs the Bay of Quinte Restoration Council; coordinates the administration of the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan (BQRAP) and provides communications and technical support aimed at rehabilitating the Bay.

In 2012, the BQRAP collaborated on the development of a phosphorus model for the Bay and a watershed phosphorus loading model. Together these models will provide the cleanup program with the information it needs to develop a Phosphorus Management Strategy for the Bay. This document will guide future management actions, which will ensure the Bay doesn't return to the conditions that required a Remedial Action Plan.

Another environmental challenge received a status change – “restrictions on dredging activities” was designated as “Unimpaired”. This is a great indication that the BQRAP is closer to its goal of removing the Bay from the Areas of Concern list.

The *State of the Bay Science Forum* brought together over 60 scientists to evaluate the 9 remaining Beneficial Use Impairments (BUI). The science supports changing the status of 3 more of the BUI's in the coming year.

The Habitat Enhancement Program continued to help landowners rehabilitate shorelines, install livestock fencing and enhance wildlife habitat all to improve water quality in the Bay. The Community Wildlife Monitoring Program engaged over 60 volunteers to monitor wetlands around the Bay.

Various outreach and education activities updated the public on the health of the Bay including a live Osprey camera, photo contest, Bay in a New Way ad campaign and tours on the Ministry of Natural Resources new fisheries vessel.

www.bqrapp.ca

Bay of Quinte designated an Area of Concern in 1985

The environmental concerns included: excess nutrients, persistent toxic contamination, bacterial contamination, and the loss or destruction of fish and wildlife habitat.

A Remedial Action Plan (RAP) is the response of government, industry, and the local community to implement actions that will ultimately remove the Area of Concern status from the Bay.



Bay of Quinte
Remedial Action Plan

Our Staff in 2012

Administration

Glenda Rodgers, General Manager
Don Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer
Anna Morgan, Resources Information Technician

Communications, Marketing and Education

Marilyn Bucholtz, Communications Coordinator (+DWSP)
Daniel Orr, Communications & Education Technician

Flood Protection Services/Planning & Permits

Mike Lovejoy, Hazard Lands Program Coordinator
Cristal Heintzman (Kelly Weste to March), Environmental Planner

Conservation Lands

Dave Impey, Conservation Lands Program Coordinator
Frank Cherrier, Conservation Lands Assistant
Lee Barre, Conservation Lands Labourer

Watershed Management & Monitoring

Anne Anderson, Watershed Management Coordinator (+BQRAP)
Will Murphy, GIS Technician
Sharlene Richardson, Watershed Planning Ecologist
Ewa Bednarczuk, Ecologist

Stewardship

Caroline Zawadzka, Landowner Contact Specialist

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan (BQRAP)

Sarah Midlane-Jones, Communications
Shan Mugalingam, Water Resources Engineer (+DWSP)

Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP)

Jennifer Stephens, Project Manager
Andrew Doiron, Planning Coordinator
Jeffrey Meyer, GIS Data Management Specialist
Diana Tyner, Source Protection Planning Assistant
Myriam Genet, Administrative Assistant

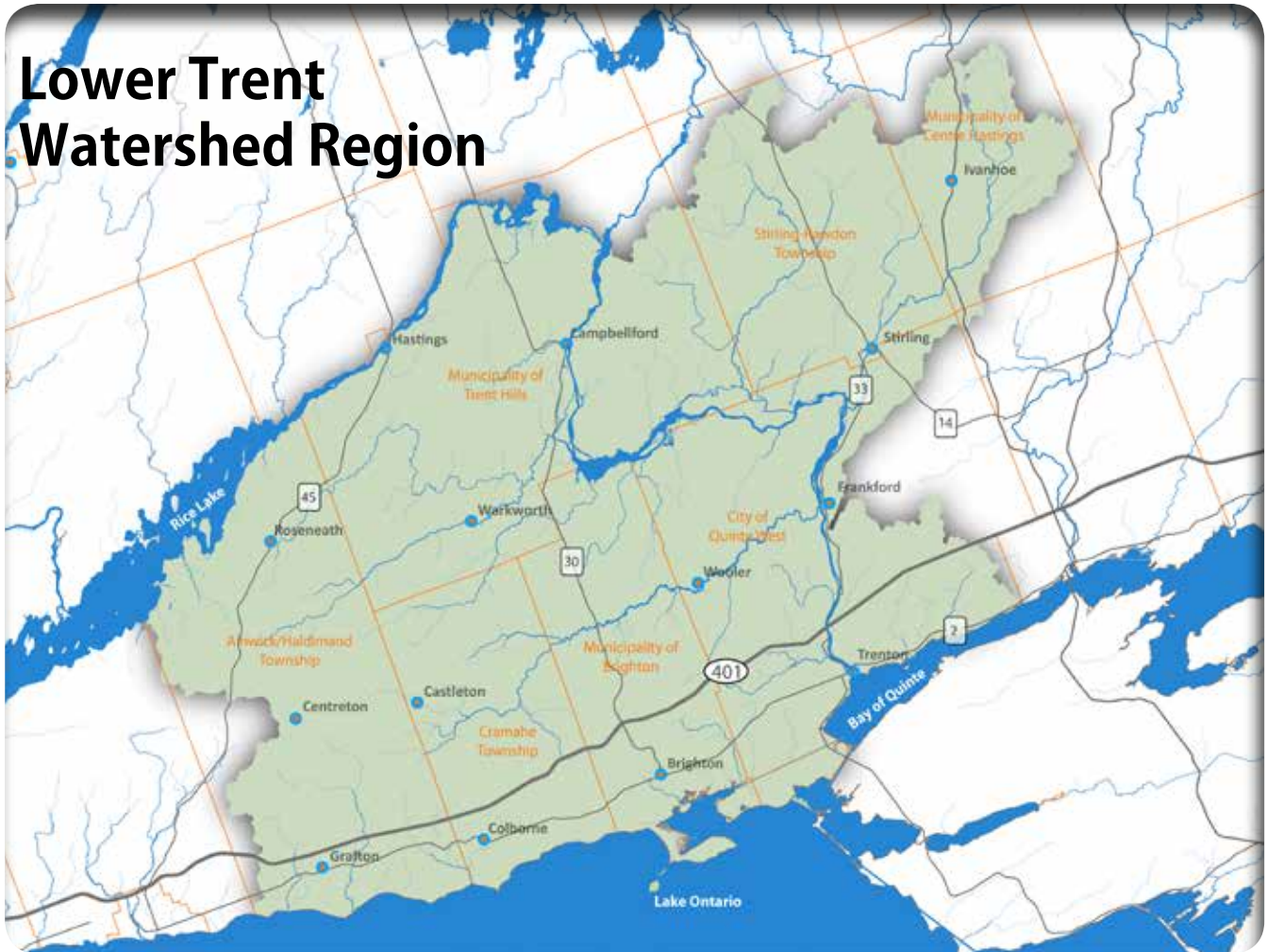
Short-term contract, summer, and internship positions are not listed above.

A restructuring exercise was conducted in 2012 resulting in changes to the organizational structure and staff complement. The Board of Directors and General Manager greatly appreciate the contributions of all staff to the 2012 program.



STAFF

Lower Trent Watershed Region



Encompassing 2,121 square kilometres, the jurisdiction of Lower Trent Conservation includes the lower Trent River watershed and a number of smaller watersheds that drain into Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte.

Municipalities in the Lower Trent watershed region appoint representatives to the Board of Directors. The 10-member Board, representing the seven municipalities located either entirely or partially within the watershed region, oversee the activities of the Conservation Authority and report back to their respective municipal councils.

2012 Board of Directors

Alnwick/Haldimand

Joan Stover

Brighton

Craig Kerr (Chair)
Mary Tadmán

Centre Hastings

Larry Mitz

Cramahe

Patricia Westrope
(Vice Chair)

Quinte West

Jim Alyea
Jim Harrison

Stirling-Rawdon

Wilfred Shier

Trent Hills

Kim MacNeil
Bill Thompson



Lower Trent Conservation

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LowerTrent



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