



LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Member of



**Conservation
ONTARIO**
Natural Champions

Message from the CAO and Chair



Rhonda Bateman, CAO



Jim Alyea, Chair

2019 was a year of transition at Lower Trent Conservation (LTC). It began with the retirement announcement of the CAO, Glenda Rodgers after 29 years with LTC and the hiring of the new CAO in May. Sadly, in March, former Chair and Board member, Ray Bennis passed away. In mid-April, all conservation authorities were notified of a drastic decrease in the provincial funding envelope that took effect immediately. LTC staff and Board members participated in pre-consultation with the province on potential changes to the legislative mandate and regulations.

During this transition year, Lower Trent Conservation staff accomplished a great deal including the successful launch of the Volunteers for Conservation Plan, the adoption and implementation of a new Information Management Classification Structure and Retention Policy, stewardship projects including buffer planting in the Murray Marsh Natural Habitat Area, improvement projects for Proctor Park Conservation Area and another successful year campaigning for donations and grant funding. We reached record high numbers for both development and planning applications in 2019. High water levels on Lake Ontario were a prominent focus of staff time and effort.

Upon receipt of the new provincial direction on Conservation Authority mandates, we will confirm our roles with our municipal partners over the coming year to develop additional agreements to deliver their priority program areas. LTC has the capacity to find positive momentum forward as we transition to the new fiscal and regulatory realities. Our opportunities will continue to grow as we search for new and unique partnerships that can benefit all parties.

We are pleased to present the following 2019 Annual Report to outline our accomplishments. These successes are reflective of the resiliency and pride that our staff possess and demonstrate daily.

Board of Directors 2019

Municipalities located within the Lower Trent Conservation 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, oversees the activities of the Conservation Authority and reports back to their respective municipal councils.

Township of Alnwick/ Haldimand

Mike Filip

Municipality of Brighton

Mary Tadman
Mark Bateman

Municipality of Centre Hastings

Eric Sandford (Vice-Chair)

Township of Cramahe

Don Clark

City of Quinte West

Jim Alyea (Chair)
Lynda Reid

Township of Stirling- Rawdon

Bob Mullin

Municipality of Trent Hills

Rick English
Gene Brahamney

About Us

Lower Trent Conservation is a community-based, non-profit environmental protection organization dedicated to protecting, restoring, and managing natural resources across the Lower Trent watershed region.

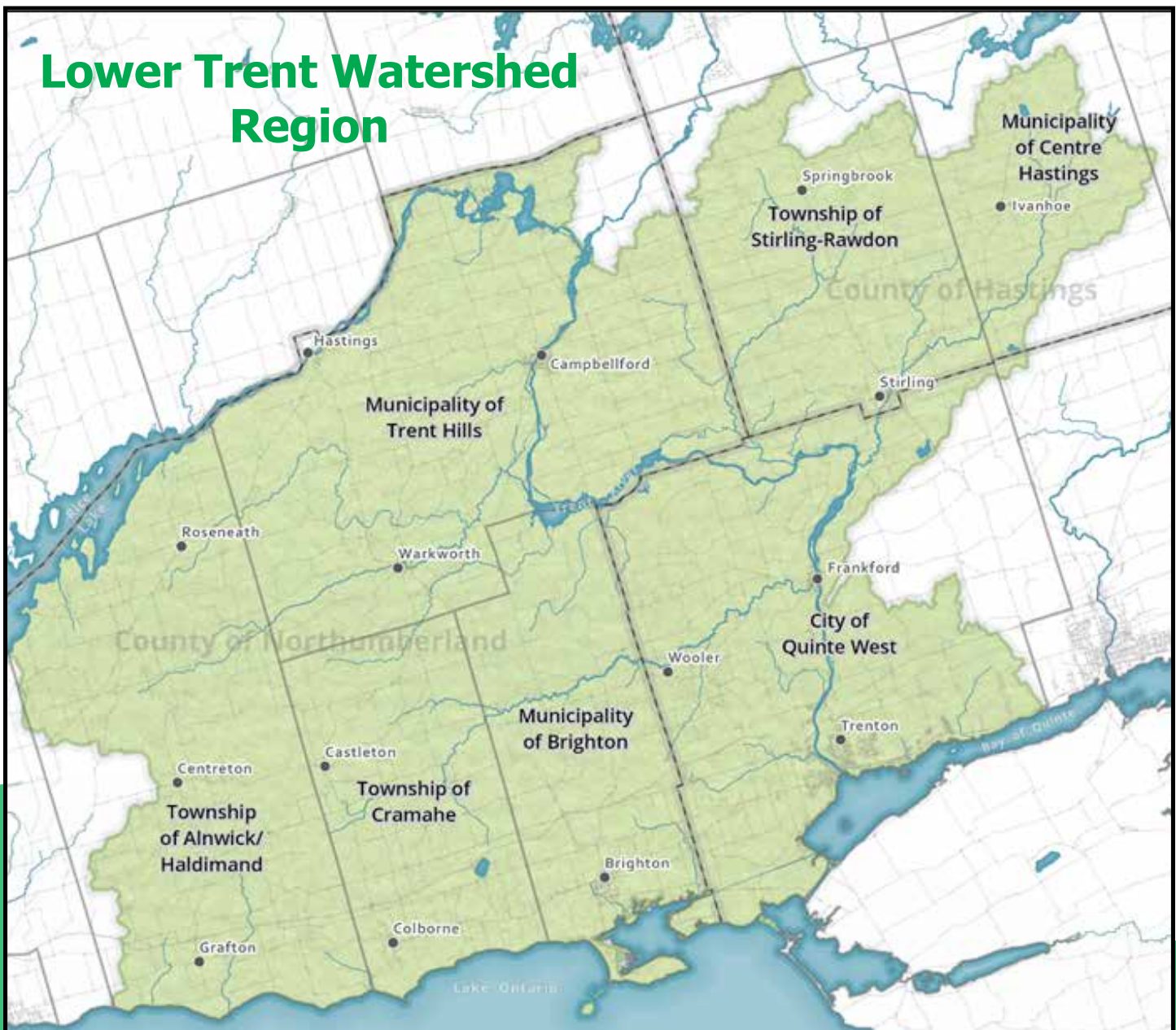
Established by the provincial government and our municipal partners in 1968, under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, Lower Trent Conservation is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario, and a member of Conservation Ontario.

Lower Trent Conservation works in partnership with municipal, provincial and federal governments, businesses, community organizations and the general public to deliver locally-based environmental programs.



Trent River along Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area

Lower Trent Conservation's watershed jurisdiction covers 2,070 square kilometres including the Trent River and the watersheds of eight main tributaries, as well as areas that flow directly into Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte between Grafton and Quinte West.



Watershed Science & Services

Environmental Planning & Regulations

Development activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines, streams, and rivers can damage the environment or pose a threat to public safety. Lower Trent Conservation offers advice to municipalities, developers, and landowners 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.

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 the protection of important natural features.

2019 Highlights

- Provided comments to local municipalities on 248 *Planning Act* applications (severances, minor variances, official plans, zoning by-laws, etc.).
- Provided ongoing review and input to 16 subdivision proposals, 2 condominium proposals and 16 site plan approval applications.
- Participated in a Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and 3 legal court cases regarding Section 28 regulations.
- Received applications for 337 permits for development activities under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act (Ontario Regulation 163/06 Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses). Approved 348 permits.
- Conducted enforcement investigations related to 32 violations. Responded to 54 complaints.
- Provided comments regarding property specific development constraints and environmental conditions for 591 general development inquiries and 33 legal requests.
- Conducted 209 site inspections to assist with the environmental review of municipal planning and permit applications
- Initiated the updated Shoreline Management Plan for Lake Ontario municipalities in conjunction with Ganaraska Region and Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authorities.
- Delivered risk management services as part of the implementation of the Trent Source Protection Plan: completed 8 risk management plans addressing 16 significant drinking water threats, conducted 5 risk management plan compliance inspections, issued 28 restricted land use notices, and confirmed 10 potential threat activities as not occurring.



Wetland Assessment Site Visit

Watershed Science & Services

Flood Forecasting & Protection Works

Lower Trent Conservation, in cooperation with local municipalities and the provincial government, plays a key role in reducing the risk of property damage and loss of life from natural hazards such as flooding.

Weather forecasts and conditions along the region's waterways are monitored daily, as part of a flood forecasting and warning system, in order to provide the earliest possible notification to municipalities and the public of the potential for flooding.

In addition, 10 flood control structures, including a dam, flood walls, berms, weirs, and overflow channels, have been constructed to help protect existing development in flood susceptible areas from potential damages resulting from a flood. The structures were constructed with the aid of the Province of Ontario and local municipalities on a cost-sharing basis.

2019 Highlights

- Issued 32 bulletins regarding high water levels on local waterways: 7 water safety statements, 5 flood outlook statements, 6 flood watches and 14 Flood Warnings. Eight of these notices were watershed wide, 9 were specifically for the Trent River and 15 notices were in regard to Lake Ontario.
- Addressed 31 public inquiries for updates and advice in conjunction with spring freshet flows on the Trent River and 20 inquiries for updates on Lake Ontario water levels.
- Conducted daily risk assessments for flood forecasting including monitoring weather forecasts, water levels/flows at 13 stations, and precipitation at 10 stations; carried out 12 snow surveys at 4 snow sampling sites.
- Conducted annual inspections of 10 flood control structures.
- Completed the Warkworth Dam Safety Review Update, Public Safety Risk Assessment and Emergency Preparedness Plan.



Watershed Science & Services

Environmental Monitoring & Reporting

Watershed monitoring activities focus on collecting environmental data to evaluate and report on existing conditions within the watershed. Analyzing the data helps to establish priorities for protection and rehabilitation activities. Lower Trent Conservation works in partnership with our municipalities on water monitoring programs to support local initiatives as well as provincial monitoring networks.

2019 Highlights

- Sampled and analyzed benthic invertebrates at 26 stream sites; these organisms live in the bottom of streams and are indicators of water quality.
- Collected 144 surface water quality samples at 18 monitoring sites from March through October.
- Sampled groundwater quality at 4 well monitoring sites.
- Analyzed thermal water characteristics for 21 streams; 30 temperature probes installed.



Collecting benthic samples



Groundwater quality sampling



Staff Placing Identifier for Temperature Probe

Watershed Science & Services

Education, Outreach & Stewardship

Education and outreach are critically important for engaging residents in environmentally sustainable behaviours and drawing attention to conservation issues. Special events, workshops, and landowner stewardship activities provide opportunities for people to learn about and get involved in the protection of natural resources within the watershed region. Lower Trent Conservation also recognizes that the students of today are the environmental champions of tomorrow. Through a variety of educational activities, young people learn about the importance of our natural environment and are inspired to care for our precious environment. Lower Trent Conservation's youth environmental education initiatives are made possible through grants and donations from local industry, business, service clubs, and private individual supporters.

2019 Highlights

- Hosted annual the 10th Tri-County Children's Water Festival at Batawa Ski Hill; 1056 students, teachers, parents/volunteers participated in the 2-day event.
- Awarded \$9,900 in cash prizes in the Caring for Our Watersheds™ competition; 203 Grade 7-9 students from 10 area schools participated; funding was provided to implement 3 student proposals.
- Provided 74 in-class/in-field presentations to 2,575 students; attended 6 children's day camps/youth groups, with over 203 children.
- Hosted the inaugural Farewell Frost Fest at Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area, the 15th annual Seymour Family Fishing Day at Seymour Conservation Area, the Nifty Nature event at Proctor Park, and delivered 4 guided events through the 'Discovering our Watershed' 2019 OUTDOOR Series
- Participated in 19 community events and delivered 12 guest speaker presentations.
- Launched new *Native Plant Sale* program which saw 12,250 native tree and wildlife shrub seedlings, 50 large stock saplings and 2,880 wildflowers sold.
- Raised awareness regarding drinking water source protection as part of 600 door-to-door visitations and 13 community events.
- Planted 6,842 trees and shrubs to create a 30-meter riparian buffer at Murray Marsh Natural Habitat Area.
- Completed invasive species monitoring at Bleasdel Boulder Conservation Area and Sager Conservation Area and monitored agricultural fields at Keating Hoards Natural Habitat Area for grassland birds.
- Partnered in Stage 2 of the "Stream to Shore Restoration" project with Alderville Black Oak Savanna, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) and local schools.



Conservation Lands

Lower Trent Conservation owns 1,540 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 that range in size from small parkettes to over 650 hectares. Ten properties are classified as Conservation Areas and provide venues for healthy, active lifestyles such as hiking, mountain biking, fishing, canoeing, and other outdoor recreational activities. These properties feature over 27 kilometres of trails, and other facilities such as parking lots, privies, boat launches, picnic shelters, and the Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Centre. In addition, seven Natural Habitat Areas, while open to the public, are left in a natural state with no maintained trails or recreational facilities.

2019 Highlights

- Booked conservation area facilities for 71 groups including the Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Centre, picnic pavilions and trails.
- Maintained trails and painted kiosks, pavilions, picnic tables, and benches in all 10 conservation areas.
- Retrofitted the Lower Trent Conservation main office with energy-efficient LED lighting reducing the energy consumption by 60% with respect to those replaced.
- Implemented first stage of the Proctor Park Conservation Area Improvement Plan including the installation of new cedar rail fences, naturalization of habitat and creation of Lower Trent Conservation's new *Memorial and Recognition Grove*.
- Hosted Conservation Land managers from across Ontario at an information session and tour of Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area.
- Painted exterior doors, railings, parking spaces and steps at Lower Trent Conservation's main office.
- Installed a new culvert in the entrance to Seymour Conservation Area to improve drainage.
- Removed hazard trees on Lower Trent Conservation properties including those infected with Emerald Ash Borer.
- Implemented various measures to improve the operation of the Warkworth Dam.
- Implemented experimental removal of Autumn Olive at Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area.
- Installed regulation and property signs at Burnley Creek Natural Habitat Area and had a variety of other safety-related signs manufactured for posting at various conservation lands.

Warkworth Dam Summer 2019



Posting New Signage at Conservation Areas



Replacing Culvert at Seymour Conservation Area



Family Fishing Day 2019, Seymour Conservation Area



Corporate Services

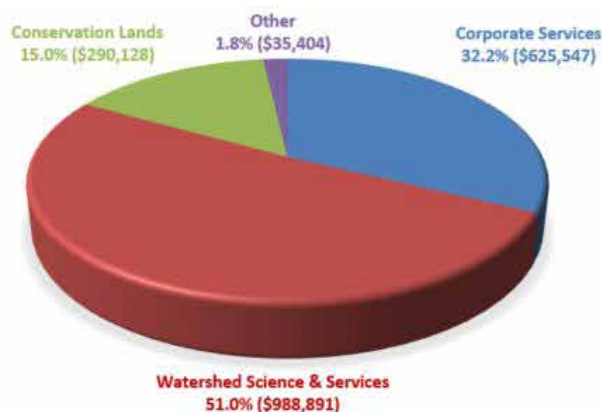
Corporate Services is an important part of day-to-day operations, providing support to all Lower Trent Conservation programs. These include: financial and human resource management; administrative and IT (computer) support; program planning and development; customer relations; partnership building; information management; GIS (mapping); and marketing and communications.

2019 Highlights

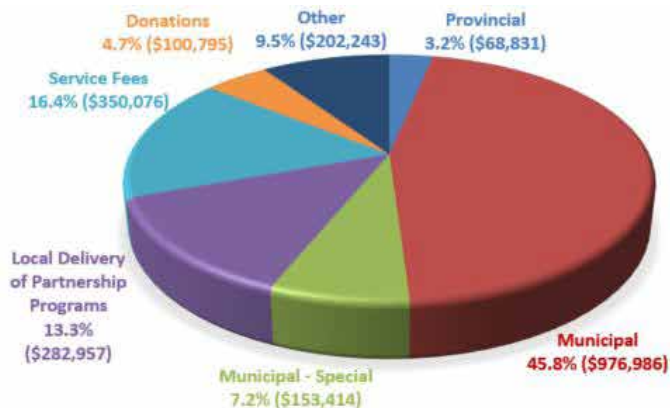
- Provided orientation to new members appointed to our Board of Directors for 2018-2022
- Reviewed and updated the Purchasing Policy
- Adopted new LTC Information Management Strategy, implemented the new Classification Structure and Retention Policy and trained staff
- Participated in asset management training in conjunction with eastern region conservation authorities
- Developed the Volunteers for Conservation Plan
- Reviewed and updated the Fund Development Strategy
- Raised over \$98,776 in donations/grants and accepted gifts in-kind valued at \$9,387
- Adopted new LTC Memorial and Recognition Grove Program with first tree and plaque purchases completed
- Updated the LTC Watershed Map (including expansion of watershed area)
- Received national recognition for Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping by Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) publication of their 2020 Canada Calendar
- Automated workflow upgrade to online inquiry for legal requests
- Celebrated retirement of former CAO Glenda Rodgers and welcomed new CAO Rhonda Bateman

2019 Financial Summary

Expenditures - \$1,939,970



Revenue - \$2,135,302



Financial summary does not include partnership programs (Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan & Drinking Water Source Protection) administered by Lower Trent Conservation. Surplus is due to donations and unanticipated revenue.

Audited financial statements are available at LTC.on.ca

Partnership Programs

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

Lower Trent Conservation coordinates the local administration of the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan, co-chairs the Bay of Quinte Restoration Council, and provides communications and technical support aimed at rehabilitating the Bay.

In 2019, further progress was made with addressing the environmental health issues for the Bay of Quinte. Beach closures was formally re-designated as unimpaired bringing the total restored environmental health issues to six. A report recommending an unimpaired status for restrictions on drinking water or taste and odour problems has been submitted to Environment and Climate Change Canada and Ontario's Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for formal re-designation to unimpaired. This leaves four environmental health issues remaining to be addressed: degradation of aesthetics, restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption, eutrophication and undesirable algae and degradation of phytoplankton and zooplankton.

Eutrophication and undesirable algae has always been the main issue with the Bay and a long-term phosphorus management strategy is required. A discussion paper has been prepared and consultation with local municipalities and other stakeholders began in 2019.



Drinking Water Source Protection

The intent of the Clean Water Act (2006) is to protect sources of water for municipal drinking water systems, ultimately protecting human health and the environment. This legislation focuses on prevention by developing collaborative, watershed-based source protection plans that are both locally driven and science-based.

Supporting municipalities and other stakeholders with implementation and reporting on progress is an ongoing priority. The Trent and Ganaraska Source Protection Plans came into effect on January 1, 2015. Implementing bodies became responsible for enacting 154 policies set out in the plans. As the lead Source Protection Authority (SPA) for the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region, Lower Trent Conservation provided technical and administrative support to the Source Protection Committee and Crowe Valley, Ganaraska Region, Kawartha-Haliburton,

Lower Trent, and Otonabee-Peterborough SPAs such as coordination of meetings, preparation of the Annual Progress Report, and development and implementation of the annual Business Plan.

The 28-member Source Protection Committee has been monitoring the progress of the policy implementation phase, while working on improvements to the existing policies in an effort to enhance the effectiveness of the policies. Plan amendments are also required when a drinking water system changes. Amendments to the Source Protection Plan for the new well in Norwood were approved by the Ministry in 2019. Currently new wells in Stirling, Pinewood and Canadiana Shores are going through the amendments process which includes consultation with stakeholders and the public.



Our 2019 Staff

Rhonda Bateman, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer (Glenda Rodgers Jan - May)

Corporate Services

Kelly Vandette, Manager, Corporate Services
Sandi Ramsay, Communications Specialist
Anna Morgan, Finance & Information Technician
Jeffrey Meyer, Information Technology Specialist
Robert Elliot, Communications & Fundraising Assistant *

Watershed Science & Services

Anne Anderson, Manager, Community Outreach & Special Projects
Janet Noyes, Manager, Development Services & Water Resources
Leah Stephens, Environmental Planner/Regulations Officer
Gage Comeau, Water Resources Specialist/Regulations Officer
Victoria Heffernan, Development Services Technician
Ewa Bednarczuk, Ecology & Stewardship Specialist
Chris McLeod, Source Protection Risk Management Official/Inspector
Corinne Harris, Environmental Education Technician
Chelsea Houston, Assistant Water Resources Technician +
Scott Robertson, Assistant Water Resources Technician +
Ellie Anderson, Education & Outreach Technician +

Conservation Lands

David Beamer, Manager, Conservation Lands
Frank Cherrier, Conservation Lands Maintenance Technician
Nolan Kelly, Conservation Lands Staff +
Liam Bailey-McDade, Conservation Lands Staff +

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

Sarah Midlane-Jones, Community Outreach Specialist
Shan Mugalingam, Technical Specialist
Brittany Williams, Environmental Stewardship Technician *

Drinking Water Source Protection

Keith Taylor, Program Coordinator (Valerie Bowering Jan - Oct)
Trent Bos, Program Assistant*

* Short Term/Seasonal Position

+ Summer Student Position

A group of people are seen from behind, walking along a dirt path in a forest. The path is covered with fallen leaves and some patches of snow or frost. The trees are tall and thin, with bare branches, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The people are wearing various outdoor clothing, including jackets and hats.

*2019 Discovering Our Watershed
'Ground Awakening' Guided Hike
at Proctor Park Conservation Area*



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