



LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Member of



**Conservation
ONTARIO**
Natural Champions

Message from the CAO and Chair



Rhonda Bateman, CAO



Jim Alyea, Chair

2020 was a Year of Resilience, not just at Lower Trent Conservation, but across the globe with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although normal operational practices had to drastically change, we persevered in a responsible manner to protect both our staff and our clients. LTC migrated a new email service to make it easier for staff to work from home. Our essential service staff for flood forecasting and warning, planning and regulations and conservation lands adapted to working throughout the pandemic with safety restrictions in place.

The year saw positive progress on many fronts with Lake Ontario water levels subsiding considerably resulting in lower flood threats along the lakeshore and decreasing erosion risk to properties. Lower Trent Conservation (LTC) developed a new Capital Asset Management Plan which identifies maintenance and replacement schedules and related costs existing assets. The final report for the Lake Ontario Shoreline Management Plan was received and approved by the Board. Watershed Science and Services developed new guidelines for stormwater management in support of our role to provide advice and recommendations to our municipal partners. Development application numbers reached record highs for the second year in a row. Repairs to the Rawdon Creek flood and erosion control works were completed in partnership with the Township of Stirling-Rawdon. The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan program successfully delisted BUI #9 – “Restrictions on Drinking Water or Taste and Odour Problems”. LTC was able to complete a COVID-safe delivery of the Native Plant sales in the spring.

Provincial consultations regarding changes to the Conservation Authorities Act were completed in early February. Release of the amendments to the Act occurred in November and passed the legislature in early December. When the directives are received from the province, in 2021, LTC will be working diligently with our municipal partners to achieve suitable and sustainable program delivery.

We are pleased to present the 2020 Annual Report outlining LTC's accomplishments. The success of completed projects reflects the Resiliency of our staff to operate under non-optimal conditions and continue to produce excellent results.

Board of Directors 2020

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 Braham

About Us

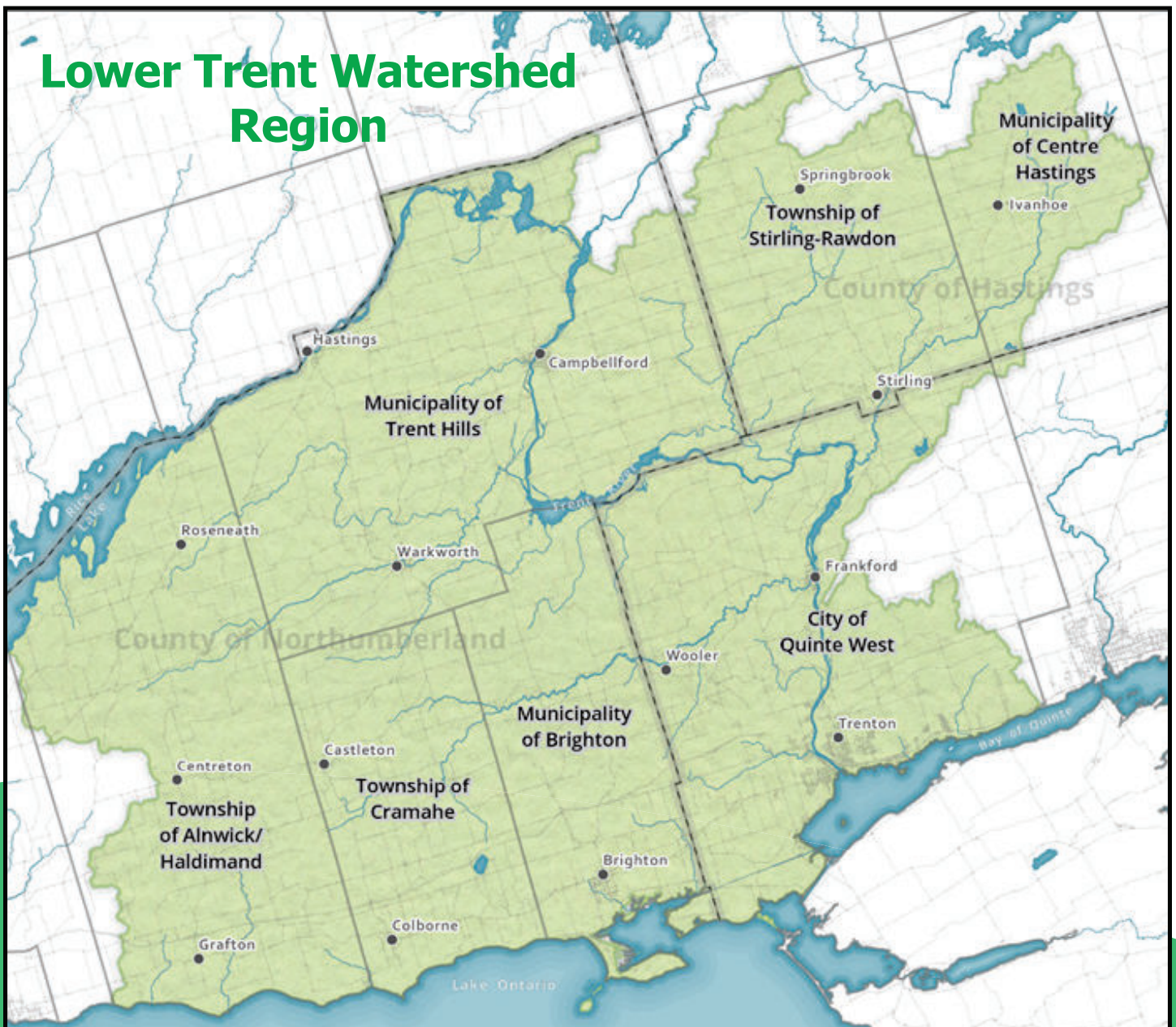
Lower Trent Conservation is a community-based, non-profit environmental protection organization dedicated to protecting, restoring, and managing natural resources across the Lower Trent watershed region.

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.



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

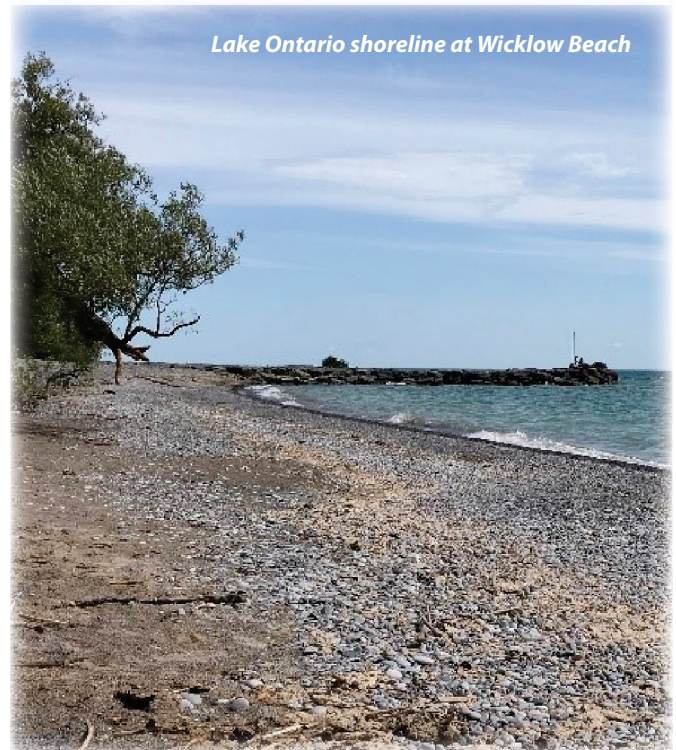
Environmental Planning & Regulations

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.

2020 Highlights

- Provided comments to local municipalities on 164 *Planning Act* applications (severances, minor variances, official plans, zoning by-laws, etc.).
- Provided ongoing review and input to 18 subdivision proposals, 3 condominium proposals and 14 site plan approval applications.
- Participated in 2 legal court cases regarding Section 28 regulations and executed 4 search warrants to investigate complaints.
- Received applications for 350 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) and approved 332 permits.
- Conducted enforcement investigations related to 32 violations. Responded to 56 complaints.
- Responded to 715 online property inquiries and provided comments regarding property specific development constraints and environmental conditions for 585 new general development inquiries and 28 legal requests.
- Conducted 159 site inspections to assist with the environmental review of municipal planning and permit applications.
- Completed and approved the updated Shoreline Management Plan for Lake Ontario municipalities in conjunction with Ganaraska Region and Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authorities.
- Updated the Bay of Quinte Flood Hazard for 100-year flood threshold.
- Developed the LTC Stormwater Management Technical Guidelines for Development Applications.
- Delivered risk management services as part of the implementation of the Trent Source Protection Plan: completed 1 risk management plan addressing 1 significant drinking water threat, conducted 4 risk management plan compliance inspections, 9 inspections for prohibited activities, issued 10 restricted land use notices, and confirmed 2 significant drinking water threats were no longer occurring.



Lake Ontario shoreline at Wicklow Beach

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.



Rawdon Creek Flood Control Channel in Stirling



Snow Surveying

2020 Highlights

- Issued 13 bulletins regarding high water levels on local water systems: 2 water safety statements, 7 flood outlook statements, 4 flood watches and one Flood Watch Cancellation. Six of these notices were watershed wide, 5 were specifically for the Trent River and 3 notices were in regard to Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte.
- 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.
- Completed the Erosion Assessment of Earthen Embankment at the Warkworth Dam as recommended in the Dam Safety Study.
- Seasonal operation of the Warkworth Dam: Logs In (May 4, 2020) and Logs Out (November 6, 2020).

Environmental Monitoring and Reporting

Watershed monitoring activities focus on collecting data to evaluate and report on existing conditions within the watershed. Lower Trent Conservation works in partnership with our municipalities on water monitoring programs to support local initiatives as well as provincial monitoring networks. Due to Covid-19 this program was not active in 2020.

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.

2020 Highlights

- Awarded \$9,000 in cash prizes in the Caring for Our Watersheds™ competition; 205 Grade 7-9 students from 3 area schools participated.
- Provided 11 in-class presentations to 285 students.
- Hosted the Wellness for Watersheds event in collaboration with Loyalist College.
- Organized the *Native Plant Sale* program, which saw approx. 13,000 native tree and wildlife shrub seedlings, 100 large stock saplings and 3,240 wildflowers sold.
- Raised awareness regarding drinking water source protection as part of 150 door-to-door visitations.
- Completed Lower Trent Adventure audio tour prototype with Fleming College Credit For Product students.
- Initiated a Community Resiliency project with University of Guelph students.
- Delivered a webinar on how to build a rain garden including a radio interview.
- Coordinated a shoreline planting project on Lake Ontario.
- Implemented enhancement of tallgrass prairie remnants at Sager Conservation Area.
- Established new 30-meter riparian buffer at Murray Marsh Natural Habitat Area.
- Developed and implemented a social media campaign in support of public awareness about our conservation areas during the COVID-19 pandemic.



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.

2020 Highlight

- Gratefully received a donation of land for the expansion of Proctor Park Conservation Area.
- Implemented the second stage of the Proctor Park Conservation Area Improvement Plan including; the installation of a new gate, naturalization of habitat and the installation of new signage.
- Planting of native trees with Brighton Lions Club at Proctor Park.
- Wildflower planting at Proctor Park with Brighton Horticultural Society.
- Upgraded a section of the Bleasdell Boulder trail system.
- Installed an entrance sign at Sager Conservation Area.
- Installed safety-related signs for conservation lands
- Removed hazardous trees including those infected with Emerald Ash Borer, invasive species such as the Black Locust and trees damaged in wind storms.
- Repaired benches in the Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area.
- Supported Trans Northern Pipeline Inc. in the use of the Glen Miller Conservation Area as a staging area to perform important maintenance work on a pipeline that runs under the Trent River.
- Collaborate with the City of Quinte West for the development of a new parking area at the Keating Hoards Natural Habitat Area.
- Maintained trails and painted kiosks, pavilions, picnic tables, and benches in all local conservation areas.



Corporate Services

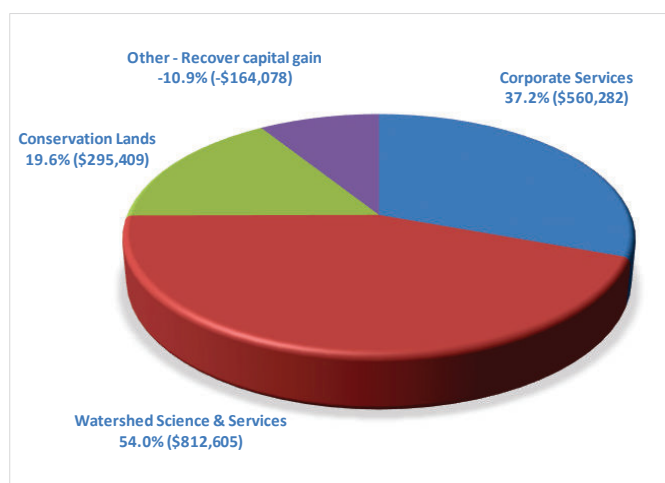
Corporate Services is an important part of day-to-day operations, providing support to all Lower Trent Conservation programs. These include: financial and human resource management; administrative and IT support; program planning and development; customer relations; partnership building; information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

2020 Highlights

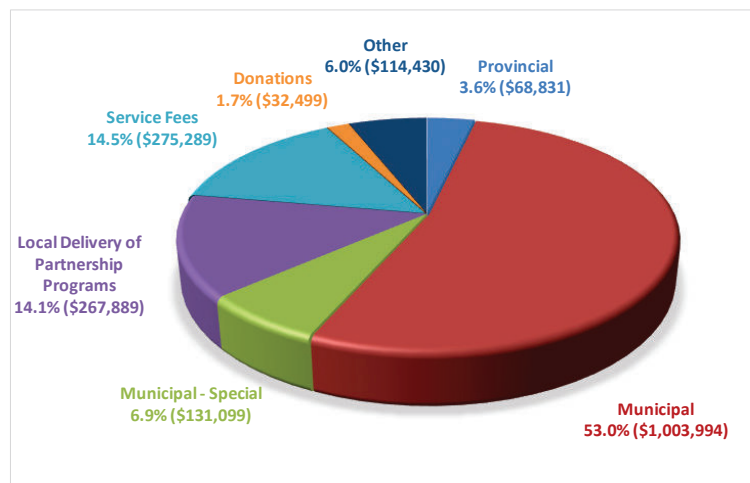
- Developed and adopted the Lower Trent Conservation Capital Asset Management Plan.
- Developed the first Lower Trent Conservation Capital Budget for 2021.
- Modernized Lower Trent Conservation email system and software to Microsoft Office 365.
- Researched and purchased Sage50 Premium Accounting software for updating accounting software that will be rolled out for 2021.
- Implemented disposition for Information Management Retention Schedule for "destruction" process of electronic records.
- Updated the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Policy and Procedures Manual.
- Updated Administrative By-law to allow virtual meetings with the Board of Directors and public.
- Sold 467 North Front Street, Trenton property.
- Updated Lake Ontario and Bay of Quinte flood hazard mapping to reflect the Lake Ontario Shoreline Management Plan.
- COVID-19 Response – with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, developed Emergency and Back to Work Protocols, standard operating procedures, best practices and work from home protocols to ensure the health and safety of staff.

2020 Financial Summary

Expenditures - \$1,504,218



Revenue - \$1,894,031



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 unanticipated revenue and gain on sale of tangible capital assets.
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 2020, further progress was made with addressing the environmental health issues for the Bay of Quinte. Restrictions on drinking water or taste and odour problems was formally re-designated as unimpaired bringing the total restored environmental health issues to seven. A public comment period was held for degradation of aesthetics. Restoration Council will review the comments and advise on next steps. This leaves three environmental health issues remaining to be addressed: 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 continued in 2020.



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 wells in Stirling, Pinewood and Canadiana Shores were approved by the Ministry in 2020.



Our 2020 Staff

Rhonda Bateman, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

Corporate Services

Kelly Vandette, Manager, Corporate Services
Corinne Ross, Communications Specialist (Sandi Ramsay Jan-Apr)
Anna Morgan, Finance & Information Technician
Jeffrey Meyer, GIS and Information Technology Specialist

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, Assistant Planning Technician
Kristen Sullivan, Assistant Development Technician*
Ewa Bednarczuk, Ecology & Stewardship Specialist
Chris McLeod, Source Protection Risk Management Official/Inspector
Corinne Ross, Environmental Education Technician (Jan - Oct)

Conservation Lands

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

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

Sarah Midlane-Jones, Community Outreach Specialist
Shan Mugalingam, Technical Specialist
Jason Jobin, Environmental Stewardship Technician *

Drinking Water Source Protection

Keith Taylor, Program Coordinator
Trent Bos, Program Assistant

* Short Term/Seasonal Position

+ Summer Student Position

Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Area



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