



Board of Directors Meeting

A G E N D A

October 17, 2024
2:00 p.m.

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1. First Nations Acknowledgement

We will begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of First Nations people who have longstanding relationships to the land, water and region of southwestern Ontario. We also acknowledge the local lower Thames River watershed communities of this area which include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, Munsee Delaware Nation, Delaware Nation, Caldwell Nation and Walpole Island First Nation. We acknowledge the first nations people within the villages, towns and cities of our communities. We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America). We are thankful for the opportunity to live, learn and share with mutual respect and appreciation.

5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

5.1) Board of Directors Meeting Minutes August 22, 2024



Board of Directors Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority's Board of Directors was held in person and remotely via the LTVCA's Administration Office at 100 Thames Street, Chatham, at 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, August 22, 2024. The following directors were in attendance: S. Emons, K. Loveland, P. Tiessen, R. Leatham, P. Van Meerbergen, H. Aerts, and T. Thompson. S. Hipple, L. Vogler, M. Vink, A. Finn and M. Bondy sent their regrets.

1. First Nations Acknowledgment

Mark Peacock read the First Nations acknowledgement.

2. Call to Order

3. Adoption of Agenda

BD-2024-37 R. Leatham – P. Tiessen

Moved that the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

4. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest

None Declared.

5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

BD-2024-38 P. Tiessen – K. Loveland

Moved that the Board of Directors meeting minutes of June 20, 2024 and July 27, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

None declared.

7. Presentations

7.1) 2025 Preliminary Budget Presentation

Todd Casier, Manager of Corporate Services provided a Power Point Presentation to the Board of Directors on the LTVCA's 2025 Preliminary Budget.

8. New Business

None declared.

9. Business for Approval

9.1) Preliminary 2025 Budget Expectations

BD-2024-39 K. Loveland – P. Tiessen

Moved that the Board of Directors approve the Budget assumption of a 6% general levy increase; and **That staff** bring the Preliminary 2025 Budget to the October meeting for review and approval.

CARRIED

9.2) Income and Expenditure vs Budget to June 30, 2024

BD-2024-40 R. Leatham – H. Aerts

Moved that the Board of Directors receives the Budget vs Revenue and Expenditures report for the period ended June 30, 2024.

CARRIED

9.3) Regulation Policy Updates

BD-2024-41 R. Leatham – P. Tiessen

Moved that effective August 23, 2024, staff continue to use both the Chatham and Thamesville Special Policies as specified in the Chatham-Kent Official Plan for development activity within the defined areas of each community; and,

Further That effective August 23, 2024, the following garden suite policies be approved for use by staff and included within the Erosion Hazard sections related to shorelines of Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair, Rondeau Bay, and apparent (confined) river or stream valleys:

Development within the Shoreline Erosion Hazard:

Development activity associated with the placement of a garden suite on a property may be permitted provided the following are met:

- a) There is no feasible alternative site outside of the erosion hazard and that the proposed development is located in an area of least (and acceptable) risk. As a minimum, the garden suite must be a minimum of 15 m beyond the stable slope allowance;*
- b) There is an agreement in place with the municipality which includes a time limit of no more than 20 years for the structure to be on the property;*
- c) The development activity will not prevent access into and through the shoreline erosion hazard in order to undertake preventative actions/maintenance or during an emergency;*
- d) There is no impact on existing and future slope stability and bank stabilization;*
- e) The potential for surficial erosion has been addressed through the submission of proper drainage, erosion and sediment control and site stabilization/restoration plans (if applicable); and,*
- f) Flooding and dynamic beach hazards (if applicable) have been adequately addressed.*

and,

Development within the Erosion Hazard of an Apparent (Confined) River or Stream Valley:

Development activity associated with the placement of a garden suite on a property may be permitted provided the following are met:

- a) There is no feasible alternative site outside of the erosion hazard and that the proposed development is located in an area of least (and acceptable) risk. As a minimum, the garden suite must be a minimum of 6 m beyond the stable slope allowance;*
- b) There is an agreement in place with the municipality which includes a time limit of no more than 20 years for the structure to be on the property;*
- c) The development activity will not prevent access into and through the erosion hazard in order to undertake preventative actions/maintenance or during an emergency;*
- d) There is no impact on existing and future slope stability and bank stabilization;*
- e) The potential for surficial erosion has been addressed through the submission of proper drainage, erosion and sediment control and site stabilization/restoration plans (if applicable); and,*
- f) The flood hazard (if applicable) has been adequately addressed.*

Further That effective August 23, 2024, the following policy be approved for use by staff and included within the Flood Hazard policy section of two-zone watercourses:

Development Within Flood Fringe of a Watercourse (Two-Zone):

Structural modifications to an existing structure may be allowed where:

- a) The works are for flood protection; or,*
- b) The works are necessary to address safety or structural faults.*

Raising of existing structures will be permitted provided that the structure is raised such that the minimum openings into the structure are at or above the regulatory flood datum. It may be necessary to have a structural engineer provide written documentation that the structure is structurally sound and able to be lifted.

Further That effective August 23, 2024, the following permanent dock policies be approved for use by staff and included within the Flooding and Erosion Hazard sections related to shorelines of Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair, and Rondeau Bay:

Development within the Shoreline Flood Hazard:

Development activity associated with the construction of docks may be permitted provided the following are met:

- a) All mechanical and electrical works be located a minimum of 0.3 m above the regulatory flood elevation;*
- b) Where the bed of the shoreline is defined in ownership, that consent is provided by the landowner;*
- c) The proposed works do not interfere with, or pose a hazard to, navigation or create a public safety hazard;*
- d) The proposed works comply with Transport Canada's minor works criteria for a dock;*
- e) The proposed works do not interfere with water flow and currents (post only, no cribs);*
- f) The proposed works do no impede dynamic beach processes on the subject, adjacent, or nearby properties;*
and,
- g) Erosion and dynamic beach hazards (if applicable) have been adequately addressed.*

For new permanent docks, the works must be designed by a qualified engineer. For repairs or like-for-like replacements of existing docks, the works don't have to be engineered but engineering is encouraged.

Sign-off / approval from Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry may be required as part of the application package as well as notification of adjacent and updrift and downdrift property owners.

and,

Development within the Shoreline Erosion Hazard:

Development activity associated with the construction of docks may be permitted provided the following are met:

- a) The development activity will not prevent access to and through the shoreline erosion hazard in order to undertake preventative actions/maintenance or during an emergency;*
- b) There is no impact on existing and future slope stability and bank stabilization;*
- c) Where the bed of the shoreline is defined in ownership, that consent is provided by the landowner;*
- d) The proposed works do not interfere with, or pose a hazard to, navigation or create a public safety hazard;*
- e) The proposed works comply with Transport Canada's minor works criteria for a dock;*
- f) The proposed works do not interfere with water flow and currents (post only, no cribs);*
- g) The proposed works do no impede dynamic beach processes on the subject, adjacent, or nearby properties;*
and,
- h) Flooding and dynamic beach hazards (if applicable) have been adequately addressed.*

For new permanent docks, the works must be designed by a qualified engineer. For repairs or like-for-like replacements of existing docks, the works don't have to be engineered but engineering is encouraged.

Sign-off / approval from Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry may be required as part of the application package as well as notification of adjacent and updrift and downdrift property owners.

Further That effective August 23, 2024, the following policy be approved for use by staff and included within the Flood Hazard policy section of both one-zone and two-zone watercourses:

Development Within One-Zone Regulatory Floodplain or Within Floodway of a Watercourse; and, Development Within Flood Fringe of a Watercourse (Two-Zone):

That encroachments, dyking and in-filling be prohibited and the hydraulic significance of the flood be maintained for the Thames River valley between the Thamesville area and Chatham.

Further That the second draft of the document entitled Policies and Procedures to Support Administration of the Conservation Authorities Act Part VI and Ontario Regulation 41/24 be provided to member municipalities and the public (via publishing on the web) for feedback.

Further That the second draft of the document entitled Policies and Procedures to Support Administration of the Conservation Authorities Act Part VI and Ontario Regulation 41/24 be brought to the October 2024 Board of Directors meeting with any comments received from the public and member municipalities.

CARRIED

9.4) CM Wilson Event Barn Renaming

BD-2024-42 K. Loveland – P. Van Meerbergen

Moved that the CM Wilson event barn be recognized and renamed as the “Stenton Barn”, allowing staff to create new signage denoting this name change and the purchase of the donation plaque in honour of the Stenton Family donation to CM Wilson Conservation Area.

CARRIED

9.5) Lifting of the LTVCA’s COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

BD-2024-43 P. Tiessen – R. Leatham

Moved that the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority repeals the LTVCA Vaccination Policy.

CARRIED

10. Business for Information

10.1) C.A.O.’s Report

BD-2024-44 P. Van Meerbergen – K. Loveland

Moved that the C.A.O. / Secretary Treasurer report be received for information.

CARRIED

10.2) Water Management

10.3) Planning and Regulations

10.4) Conservation Area Lands

10.5) Conservation Services

10.6) Communications, Outreach and Education

10.7) Ska-Nah-Doht Advisory Committee Minutes – May 31, 2024

10.8) Wheatley Two Creeks Association Annual Minutes – June 6, 2024

BD-2024-45 K. Loveland – H. Aerts

Moved that New Business items 10.2) to 10.8) be received for information.

CARRIED

11. Correspondence

11.1) Will a \$1-billion flooding bill finally make the GTA take stormwater seriously?

11.2) Who should pay when development causes floods?

BD-2024-46 P. Tiessen – H. Aerts

Moved that Correspondence items 11.1) to 11.2) be received for information.

CARRIED

12. Other Business

None noted.

13. Adjournment

BD-2024-47 P. Van Meerbergen – R. Leatham

Moved that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

Sarah Emons
Chair

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer



Special Board of Directors Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

Special Meeting at the Call of the Chair

September 30, 2024

2:00 p.m.

A Special Meeting of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority's Board of Directors was held via zoom at 2:00 P.M. on Monday, September 30, 2024 at the call of the Chair. A roll call was held with the following members in attendance: S. Emons, P. Van Meerbergen, A. Finn, R. Leatham, P. Tiessen, H. Aerts, K. Loveland, L. Vogler, and M. Vink. Regrets were sent in by T. Thompson, S. Hipple and M. Bondy.

1. First Nations Acknowledgement

Mark Peacock read the First Nations Acknowledgement.

2. Call to Order

Chair, Sarah Emons called the Special Meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 2:00 PM.

3. Adoption of Agenda

BD-2024-48 K. Loveland – R. Leatham

Moved that the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

4. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

5. Business for Approval

5.1) In Camera Session

BD-2024-49 A. Finn – P. Tiessen

Moved That the Board of Directors meet 'in camera'.

CARRIED

BD-2024-50 R. Leatham – K. Loveland

Moved That the Board of Directors move out of the 'in camera' session.

CARRIED

BD-2024-51 A. Finn – P. Van Meerbergen

Moved That the LTVCA receive funds from the Chatham-Kent United Way and disburse those funds as directed by the Opportunity Villages Community Land Trust;

And Further that the Board authorize the Chair, Vice-Chairs and CAO to sign agreements for this purpose.

CARRIED

6. Other Business

None noted.

7. Adjournment

BD-2024-52 P. Van Meerbergen – H. Aerts

Moved that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

Sarah Emons
Chair

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

7. Presentations

7.1) Draft LTVCA Lands Strategy

Mark Peacock will provide a presentation to the Board of Directors on the Draft LTVCA Lands Strategy

7.2) Draft LTVCA Asset Management Plan

Mark Peacock and Todd Casier will provide a presentation to the Board of Directors on the Draft LTVCA Asset Management Plan

7.3) Preliminary 2025 Budget

Mark Peacock and Todd Casier will provide a presentation to the Board of Directors on the Preliminary 2025 Budget

7.4) The Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program

Donna Small will provide a presentation to the Board of Directors on The Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program

9. Business for Approval

9.1) Draft LTVCA Lands Strategy

Date: October 17, 2024
Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
Subject: The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Lands Strategy Report
From: Genevieve Champagne, Manager, Conservation Lands and Services

Background

The Conservation Lands Strategy has been developed to align with the recent changes to section 10(1) of Ontario Regulation 686/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act. The strategy provides a clear set of objectives which will inform decision-making related to the management, acquisition and disposal of lands owned by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA). Currently, the LTVCA has been operating under a number of Land Management and Conservation Area Management Plans. A presentation on this strategy will be provided to the board during its October 2024 meeting.

Legislative Background

The document has been prepared based on requirements of the Conservation Authorities Act and its regulations. Proclaimed provisions within the Conservation Authorities Act and accompanying regulations establish requirements for Mandatory Programs and Services (see Section 21.1 of the Act and O. Reg. 686/21). Ontario Regulation 686/21 sets out the Mandatory Programs and Services which must be delivered by all Conservation Authorities (CAs) in Ontario. Section 10 of the regulation requires all Conservation Authorities to prepare a “Conservation Area Strategy” (“the Strategy”) as a required component of the “Conservation and Management of Lands” mandatory CA program and service area. As defined under Ontario Regulation 688/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act, “conservation area” means land owned by an authority.

Aligning with the LTVCA Strategic Plan – Draft LTVCA Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy

Guiding the LTVCA through the Conservation Land Strategy is the LTVCA Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy 2024-2029 (WBRMS). This draft document forms the overall strategic planning document for the Conservation Authority. The WBRMS provides guiding objectives for the management and developed of conservation lands. The Conservation Lands Strategy was written to address these objectives.

Land Acquisition and Disposal Policies

Updated Land Acquisition and Disposal Policies are provided in the plan. The existing approved policies were edited to create clarity but are consistent to those policies approved by the board in the past.

Classification of LTVCA Lands

The LTVCA owns and manages over 30 properties across its watershed. Property use ranges from high to low with full service campgrounds, day use facilities and nature reserves. A full review of each property that looks at parameters such as: taxes, maintenance costs, liabilities, visitor use, areas of potential income are all factors that will guide property classification.

In the past, each property was classified into one of the following 4 categories.

- a. High Use- staff present year round, facilities, charge for services. Ex. C.M. Wilson CA
- b. Medium Use- medium traffic levels, no staff, but public invited to use trails, facilities, and signage present. Ex. Devereux CA
- c. Passive Recreation Use- trails and signage. Ex. Rowsom CA
- d. Nature Reserve- not advertised, no signage, set aside as ecological reserve. Ex. Courey Islands

The difference between Medium Use and Passive Use areas has been determined to be insignificant. Additionally, it is been found that the management of lands used to house administrative staff, with limited environmental use, should constitute an additional category. Based on this, the following categories will be used in this document:

New Categories – Used in this document	Old Categories
Active Use	High Use
Passive Use	Medium Use, Passive
Nature Reserve	Nature Reserve
Administrative Areas	Part of High Use

The LTVCA Conservation Areas are classified under the new system as follows:

<u>Administration</u>	<u>Active Recreation</u>	<u>Passive Recreation</u>	<u>Nature Reserve</u>
Administration Building	C.M. Wilson *	Big O	Ashton Forest
	Longwoods Road *	Delaware	Colborne
		Dutton- Dunwich	Courey
		Lighthouse *	Diversion Channel
		McGeachy Pond	Ekfrid Forest
		Merlin	Elva Gray Tallgrass Prairie
		Millstream* & Janes Bush	Feasby
		Mosa Forest	Miller Sanctuary
		Rondeau Bay Marshes	Myslik
		Rowsom’s Tilbury West	Skakel**
		Sharon’s Creek	Stirling
		Sinclair’s Bush	Tilbury #2 Flood Control
		Two Creeks	Ward
		Walter Devereux**	Well Head
		Big Bend**	
		E.M Warwick	

* Property has a rental house on the property.

** Property has a farm lease associated with the property

Implementation - Measurable Achievements

Staff have developed a Conservation Area Strategy that includes realistic and measurable achievements broken down into an implementation chart. The chart below gives an outline of the objectives the LTVCA would like to achieve over the 5-year term. The chart lays out the framework for who within the Conservation Authority would maintain ownership of ensuring these objectives are met, the measurement of success, the implementation initiatives, budget implications and the Strategic Plan Connection.

9.1) Implementation Chart

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Measurement</u>	<u>Initiatives</u>	<u>Budget Implications</u>	<u>Strategic Connection</u>
1.	Review and Update Land Acquisition and Land Disposal Policy	CA Land Manager	Completed up to date Policy	Year 2- Review Year 3- Board Approval	Staff time	Partner of Choice
2.	Create Ecological Land Classifications for the CA Lands	SAR Team	Annually completing a number of ELCs based on funding available	Year 1 to 5- completing at least 1 ELC per year based on available funding available for staff time.	Staff time Fuel, Equipment, In-kind for Gants	Healthy and Climate Resilient Watersheds
3.	Create CA specific Conservation Management Plans	CA Land Manager, SAR Team, Lands Team	Annually completing a Land Management Plan per CA	Year 1 to 5- completing at least 1 Land Management Plan per year based on available funding and data	Staff time	Healthy and Climate Resilient Watersheds
4.	Provide equitable access to CA Lands	Communication Team	Distribution of CA Land Passes	Year 1-5 Annually provide a number of passes to each Municipality to host in their libraries Work with DEI groups	Staff time No revenue generated through the donation.	Connecting People to Nature
5.	Review assets annually and update/repair infrastructure	Lands Staff	Asset management plan implementation	Year 1-5 Annually review and update/ repair infrastructure – annual work planning	Staff time Cost per asset updated/repared	Organizational Excellence
6.	Land Acquisition	Lands Staff	Acquire lands close to growing communities to provide access to nature	Continue to work with community to have lands donated in these areas	Staff time, lawyer fees, survey acquisition costs	Connecting People to Nature
7.	Hunting	Lands Staff	Hunting considered in Conservation Area Management Plans	Management Plans	Staff time	Connecting People to Nature

Next Steps

With the support of the Board of Directors, LTVCA staff will move forward with circulating this plan to member municipalities and the residents of the watershed. This process will be undertaken during the end of October and for the month of November. Upon receipt of comments and input a final report will be brought to the Board in December 2024 for approval.

Recommended Resolution:

That The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Lands Strategy be approved for circulation to the public and member municipalities,

And That The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Lands Strategy be brought back to the LTVCA Board of Directors for approval in its December 2024 Board meeting.

The report aligns with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

1. Strengthen and Increase Collaboration with Community Stakeholders

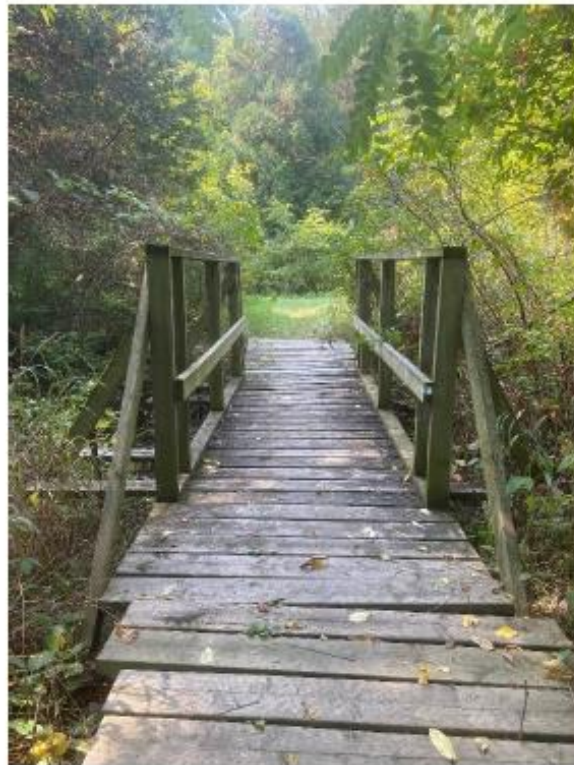
Respectfully Submitted

Genevieve Champagne
Manager Conservation Lands and Services

Mark Peacock, P.Eng.
CAO, Secretary-Treasurer



Preliminary Draft Conservation Lands Strategy



Version 1.0

For the Lands owned and operated by the

**Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
(LTVCA)**

Approved by:

Lower Valley Conservation Authority (M)(D)(Y)
Board of Directors

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Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority acknowledges that the land on which the watershed is situated within is the traditional territory of First Nations people who have longstanding relationships to the land, water and region of southwestern Ontario. We also acknowledge the local lower Thames River watershed communities of this area which include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, Munsee Delaware Nation, Delaware Nation, Caldwell Nation and Walpole Island First Nation. We acknowledge the first nations people within the villages, towns and cities of our communities. We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America). We are thankful for the opportunity to live, learn and share with mutual respect and appreciation.

Through this Conservation Lands Strategy process, the LTVCA re-confirms our commitment to shared stewardship of natural resources and shared waters, and deep appreciation of Indigenous culture and history in the Lower Thames watershed.



Figure 1: Map of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority Watershed

A brief lesson of the language
Ojibwe means – canoe builders
Anishnaabe means – a person / a human
Gichigami (get-chi-goom-ee) – the Sea
Gichi (get-chi) – Big
Gami (goom-ee) – Liquid
Lake Erie would be called Waabishkiigoo (waa-bish-key-goo) Gichigami meaning Neutral Sea
Because Lake Erie would be a boundary for neighboring nations to trading/travel
Lake St. Clair translated would be Waawiyataan (waa-we-ya-taan) – Curved shores
Resources available at <https://decolonialatlas.wordpress.com/>

1.0 Purpose & Introduction

1.1 Legislative Background:

The following document has been prepared based on requirements of the Conservation Authorities Act and its regulations. Proclaimed provisions within the Conservation Authorities Act and accompanying regulations establish requirements for Mandatory Programs and Services (see Section 21.1 of the Act and O. Reg. 686/21). Ontario Regulation 686/21 sets out the Mandatory Programs and Services which must be delivered by all Conservation Authorities (CAs) in Ontario. Section 10 of the regulation requires all Conservation Authorities to prepare a “Conservation Area Strategy” (“the Strategy”) as a required component of the “Conservation and Management of Lands” mandatory CA program and service area.

As defined under Ontario Regulation 688/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act, “conservation area” means land owned by an authority.

1.2 Purpose

This Conservation Lands Strategy has been developed to align with the recent changes to section 10(1) of Ontario Regulation 686/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act. This strategy will provide a clear set of objectives which will inform decision-making related to the management, acquisition and disposal of lands owned by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA). Currently, the LTVCA has been operating under a number of Land Management and Conservation Area Management Plans.

1.3 Introduction

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority is committed to the health and resiliency of the watershed and its residents. The LTVCA works in partnership with various municipalities, communities, groups and agencies to ensure that our community-based resource management strategies protect, enhance and sustain healthy watersheds while protecting the public from natural hazards. The LTVCA offers a wide variety of watershed programs and services from stewardship and restoration programs, to flood forecasting and hazard land management, water quality, agricultural programs, species at risk, environmental monitoring, source water protection, conservation areas, land management and community education programs.

The LTVCA is also a member of, and represented by, Conservation Ontario, which is a non-profit association. Conservation Ontario represents Ontario’s 36 Conservation Authorities, which are local watershed management agencies, mandated to ensure the conservation, restoration and responsible management of Ontario’s water, land and natural habitats through programs that balance human, environmental and economic needs. Conservation Authorities are organized on a watershed basis.

Further information about Conservation Ontario, and the history of the CA’s can be found here:

<https://conservationontario.ca/conservation-authorities/about-conservation-authorities>

The LTVCA holds approximately 704 hectares of land/natural areas, with 153 hectares under Forest Management Plans. The LTVCA has the responsibility to protect and conserve these natural areas to protect and increase the resiliency of the watershed and for future public enjoyment; this can include providing opportunities for habitat protection, research, recreation, and outdoor education. Protecting these areas help safeguard them from future development, the impacts of climate change and unnecessary human interactions.

There are many benefits of Conservation Lands including:

- Providing active and passive recreational use to the public
- Protecting significant water resources and contribute to improve water quality (headwaters, riparian lands, significant recharge and discharge areas)
- Protecting hazard lands and reduce flooding and soil erosion (floodplains, erosion sensitive areas and valley lands)
- Protecting Provincially/ Regionally Significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI- Earth and Life Science)
- Providing protection to environmentally significant/sensitive lands (wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitat, significant vegetation communities and fish habitat)
- Contribute to biodiversity and the establishment of a Natural Heritage System which would include linkages and wildlife corridors for migration.

Overall, the conservation lands owned and operated by the LTVCA are not only used for active recreational use, they are protected to promote environmental awareness. The active recreational land use allows the LTVCA to demonstrate economic opportunities through campgrounds, sound agricultural land uses, innovative outdoor education, special events and progressive land stewardship.

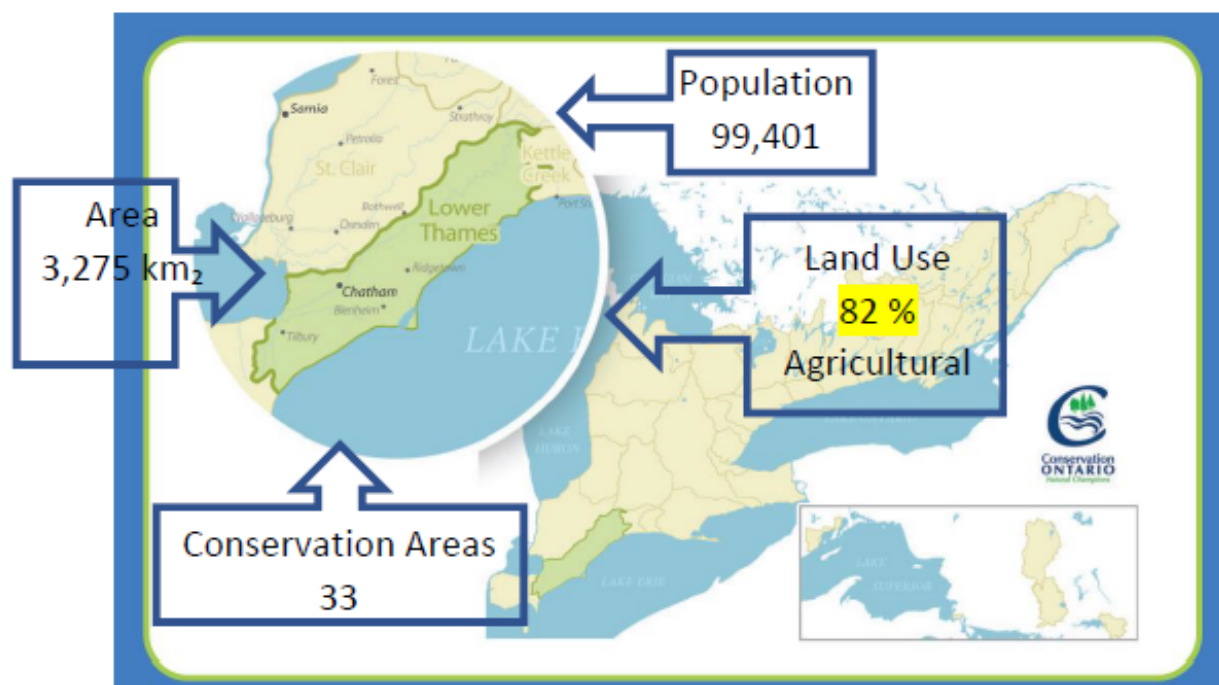


Figure 2: Map of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority Watershed in relation to the other 36 Conservation Authorities with statistics.

2.0 History of the LTVCA Conservation Lands

The History of the Lower Thames Valley can be found in the Conservation Report 1966 (reference) summary that was completed by the Department of Energy and Resources Management for the Ontario Government. This document describes the Watershed in four categories of Land, Forest, Water and Recreation. The authors also provide recommendations for watershed improvement work within these categories. The Land, Forest and Water sections of the 1966 Conservation Report focus on the entire watershed while the Recreation section gets into potential Conservation Areas that the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority should investigate further for conservation area development. These recommendations created the resource management plan for the early Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority.

Considering the use of outdoor recreation amenities, the report notes that people tend to fit into five types of users. The aim is to balance an equality of service for all of these types.

- The Outdoor Re-creationist: uses the outdoors to enhance personal relationships with nature.
- Consumer: uses the facilities that are available
- The Spectator: uses the outdoors as the tourist and sightseer who passes through
- The Simulator: uses the outdoors to do the same things he would do at home but in different surroundings.
- The Relaxationist: uses the outdoors to find rest, companionship, and opportunity for escape from social relationships.

Considering the highly developed urban and agricultural land use of the LTVCA watershed, residents often travel outside the urban areas to seek recreation along shore lines and park lands. Local land acquisition should be considered to offer a wide variety of functions locally, on a year-round basis.

At the time of the 1966 Conservation Report there was limited to no Conservation Areas, limited provincial and national parks within the region and the only city at that time was Chatham which held any significant recreation areas within the urban setting. The limited recreation available at this time did not reflect the outdoor heritage of Canada and the beauty and appeal of a natural, and wild setting for which Canada is known. There was a growing awareness among the community better local natural recreation opportunities were needed.

Five separate conservation zones within the LTVCA Watershed were defined after careful study and were suggested based on three factors which included; accessibility, distribution and topography. Of the zones suggested (in bold), the LTVCA has secured conservation areas (in italics) in and around the proposed suggested zones.

- **Jeannettes Creek**
 - *Lighthouse Conservation Area*
 - *Courey Conservation Area*
 - *Merlin Conservation Area*
- **Tecumseh Memorial Conservation Area**
 - *Administration Building*
 - *Colbourne Street*
 - *Diversion Channel*

- *C.M Wilson Conservation Area*
- **Big Bend Conservation Area**
 - *Big Bend Conservation Area*
 - *Mosa Forest Conservation Area*
 - *E.M Warwick Conservation Area*
 - *Feasby Conservation Area*
- **Muncey Conservation Area**
 - *Dutton- Dunwich Conservation Area*
 - *Ekfrid Forest*
- **Mount Brydges Conservation Area**
 - *Longwoods Road Conservation Area*
 - *Millstream & Janes Bush Conservation Area*
 - *Delaware Conservation Area*
 - *Sharon's Creek Conservation Area*

The LTVCA has acquired other properties outside of these five suggested areas; bringing the wild and natural experience closer to many other communities throughout the watershed as the population grew and expanded.

Although the original Conservation Report provided a good foundation for land acquisition and management in the Lower Thames watershed, it is time to reconsider its recommendations. Access to Conservation Areas for growing communities within the Lower Thames watershed must be considered and strategies devised to continue provision of relevant and needed services.

2.1 Historical and Cultural Values

The LTVCA works to preserve the historical and cultural resources throughout the watershed. The Conservation Authority owns historically recognized parcels of land, objects, places and infrastructure. Conservation of these cultural resources can involve restoration, rehabilitation or preservation. The LTVCA provides educational and cultural heritage programming and services through its outdoor education programs. Additionally, the historical and cultural aspects of the Thames River is recognised through a Canadian Heritage River designation and the Lighthouse within the Community of Lighthouse Cove is over 200 years old and is one of the three oldest on the Great Lakes. The LTVCA will continue to work towards restoration, rehabilitation or preservation of these assets.

2.2 Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous knowledge and values are important for Conservation Authorities as this knowledge and these values lead to respect and an understanding of responsibility for the environment. The LTVCA partners with Indigenous Nations in projects emphasizing mutual learning and sharing, and building relationships based on trust and respect. The LTVCA will work towards a holistic approach when considering environmental conservation and human well being. Additionally, the LTVCA will collaborate with multiple stakeholders to develop those approaches. The LTVCA is adaptable and flexible in addressing the needs of Indigenous partners when managing its lands.

3.0 Authorities Mission, Vision and Objectives

3.1 Our Vision

The LTVCA... for a balanced and Healthy Watershed.

3.2 Our Mission

Leading by example in environmental protection in partnership with the community.

3.3 Our Core Value

Respect, Integrity, Commitment, Objectivity and Collaboration.

4.0 Aligning with the LTVCA Strategic Plan

Guiding the LTVCA through the Conservation Land Strategy is the LTVCA Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy 2024-2029 (WBRMS). This document forms the overall strategic planning document for the Conservation Authority. The WBRMS provides the following guiding objectives for the management and developed of Conservation Lands:

4.1 Objectives through Healthy and Climate Resilient Watersheds



- Watershed Restoration required to increase biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural cover
- Develop a Climate Change Action Plan to build resilience to our conservation areas and infrastructure.

4.2 Objectives through Connecting People to Nature



- Provide equitable access to our conservation areas across the watershed
- Increase awareness of the value of good watershed stewardship
- Creating more access to greenspaces, which enrich our communities, and strengthen cultural connections and heritage appreciation
- Provide quality educational, stewardship and volunteer opportunities to the public
- Support Indigenous engagement and public learning so people can see nature, and be informed by Tradition Knowledge

4.3 Objectives through Partner of Choice



- Strengthen and increase collaboration with community stakeholders
- Strengthen Indigenous engagement and relationships

5.0 Land Acquisition and Disposal Policy

5.1 Land Acquisition Policy

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) does not currently actively seek out properties to purchase however, the LTVCA does secure lands located within its jurisdiction, on a parcel-by-parcel basis to increase the Conservation Land base and to contribute to its vision and goals. Land securement includes but is not limited to agreements with a willing landowner, donations and land bequests, land trading, fee simple purchases (often using donated/granted funds), and any other means of holding rights on land such as leasing, restrictive covenants, land use agreements and easements.

When protecting environmentally significant lands, the preferred method is holding title to the land. Use of the other land securement methods will be considered on a case by case basis with direction and approval by the Board of the Directors. For more information please refer to the LTVCA Land Acquisition Policy and Land Securement Agreement.

The LTVCA Land Acquisition Policy States:

1. Land should be donated but under certain situations could be purchased
2. Acquired land shall fit into our Land Classification criteria, which will provide either: recreational opportunities or ecological significant
3. Acquired land must be large enough or significant enough to fit into a tax relief program such as: MFTIP, CLTIP etc.
3. Donated land should have a management fund which accompanies the donation which is used to pay taxes, maintenance of buildings etc.
4. When possible, legal, zoning, planning and appraisal costs should be assumed by the donor.
5. If there is no management fund; there should be an avenue to collect revenue from the property i.e. farm land to rent, woodlot to manage for timber.
6. When possible, lands that provide a linkage, corridor or are adjacent to other natural areas, will be priority parcels for acquisition.
7. Lands that contain species at risk will be priority parcels for acquisition.
8. Lands that are identified with the LTVCA or Municipal Natural Heritage strategies will be priority parcels for acquisition.
9. Lands that are already identified as: a) Area of Natural Scientific Interest; b) Carolinian Canada site; c) Great Lakes Conservation Blueprint for Biodiversity priority site; d) Provincially Significant Wetlands; e) Important Bird Area; f) RAMSAR site; g) Natural Heritage designation under the (2005) Provincial Policy Statement; h) World Heritage Site; i) UNESCO Biosphere Reserve site will be priority parcels for acquisition.

5.2 Land Disposal Policy

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority will retain all properties that meet one or more criteria listed in the Land Acquisition Policy. In some instances, properties acquired by or donated historically to the LTVCA may not meet the needs and objectives of the Authority. In these instances, the Authority may look to dispose of these surplus lands.

6.0 Method of Classifying LTVCA Lands

The LTVCA owns and manages over 30 properties across its watershed. Property use ranges from high to low with full service campgrounds, day use facilities and nature reserves. A full review of each property that looks at parameters such as: taxes, maintenance costs, liabilities, visitor use, areas of potential income are all factors that will guide property classification.

In the past, each property was classified into one of the following 4 categories.

- a. High Use- staff present year round, facilities, charge for services. Ex. C.M. Wilson CA
- b. Medium Use- medium traffic levels, no staff, but public invited to use trails, facilities, and signage present. Ex. Devereux CA
- c. Passive Recreation Use- trails and signage. Ex. Rowsom CA
- d. Nature Reserve- not advertised, no signage, set aside as ecological reserve. Ex. Courey Islands

The difference between Medium Use and Passive Use areas has been determined to be insignificant. Additionally, it is been found that the management of lands used to house administrative staff, with limited environmental use, should constitute an additional category. Based on this, the following categories will be used in this document:

New Categories – Used in this document	Old Categories
Active Use	High Use
Passive Use	Medium Use, Passive
Nature Reserve	Nature Reserve
Administrative Areas	Part of High Use

7.0 Mandatory and Non-Mandatory Programs on LTVCA Lands

Mandatory and non-mandatory programs on LTVCA Lands are described and this section. Additionally, details of how these services are financed are provided. Mandatory or required components are described in the following regulation:

Ontario regulation 686/21 MANDATORY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES states:

Required components (Mandatory Components)

9. (1) Programs and services provided by an authority with respect to the conservation and management of lands under subparagraph 1 ii of subsection 21.1 (1) of the Act shall include the following:

1. A conservation area strategy, prepared on or before December 31, 2024 for all lands owned or controlled by the authority, including any interests in land registered on title, that meets the requirements set out in section 10.
2. Where the authority considers it advisable to achieve the objectives referred to in paragraph 1 of subsection 10 (1),
 - i. programs and services to secure the authority's interests in its lands that include measures for fencing, signage, patrolling and any other measures to prevent unlawful entry on the authority's land and to protect the authority from exposure to liability under the Occupiers' Liability Act,
 - ii. programs and services to maintain any facilities, trails or other amenities that support public access and recreational activities in conservation areas and that can be provided without the direct support or supervision of staff employed by the authority or by another person or body,
 - iii. programs and services to enable the authority, in its capacity as an owner of land, to make applications or comment on matters under the Planning Act,
 - iv. programs and services to conserve, protect, rehabilitate, establish, and manage natural heritage located within the lands owned or controlled by the authority,
 - v. programs and services to plant trees on lands owned or controlled by the authority, excluding commercial logging, and
 - vi. the development of one or more policies governing land acquisitions and land dispositions.
3. A land inventory, prepared on or before December 31, 2024, that meets the requirements set out in section 11.
4. Programs and services to ensure that the authority carries out its duties, functions and responsibilities to administer regulations made under section 29 of the Act.

(2) For greater certainty, programs and services with respect to the conservation and management of lands under subparagraph 1 ii of subsection 21.1 (1) of the Act do not apply to any lands where the authority has no legal interest in the lands registered on title and the authority has entered into an agreement with another person or body to manage the lands on the person's or body's behalf.

From the above regulation it is noted that non-mandatory programming at a conservation area are these services that are recreational activities in conservation areas that are provided with the direct support or supervision of staff employed by the authority or by another person or body. Funding of non-mandatory programs is from fees, land rental and municipal levy. It is noted that non-mandatory programs often create demand for mandatory programs. Visitors who participate in active programming often come back to conservation areas for passive recreation use.

8.0 Guidelines for Conservation Land Management

8.1 Location and Classification of Conservation Areas

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority has 10-member Municipalities and is divided into two jurisdictions; the Eastern District and the Western District.

The Western District is comprised of Chatham-Kent, Lakeshore and Leamington. The Eastern District is comprised of West Elgin, Dutton-Dunwich, Southold, Middlesex Centre, London, Strathroy-Caradoc and Southwest Middlesex. The LTVCA owns and maintains 33 conservation areas and lands ranging from administrative, active recreation, passive recreation and management areas.

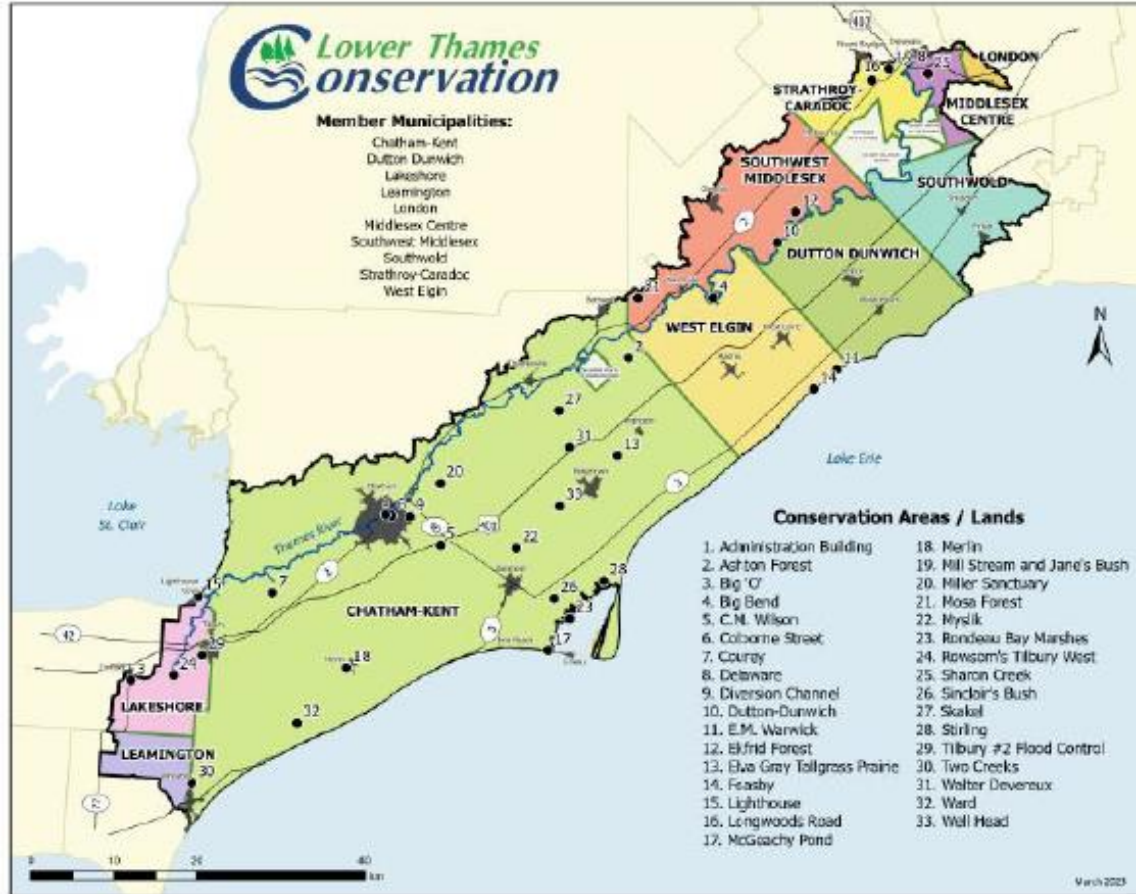


Figure 3: Map of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority Watershed with all Conservation Areas/Lands

It is the responsibility of all users of public lands to undertake their activities in an ecologically sound and socially responsible manner and to accept risks associated with such activities. Users should be aware of other activities that may be occurring within that area concurrently and should use the site at their own discretion. Conservation areas have an influence on the community they are located within, and the promotion of the conservation areas may be seen through social media, events, publications which would in turn encourage a higher public use.

The LTVCA Conservation Areas are classified as follows:

<u>Administration</u>	<u>Active Recreation</u>	<u>Passive Recreation</u>	<u>Nature Reserve</u>
Administration Building	C.M. Wilson *	Big O	Ashton Forest
	Longwoods Road *	Delaware	Colborne
		Dutton- Dunwich	Courey

	Lighthouse *	Diversion Channel
	McGeachy Pond	Ekfrid Forest
	Merlin	Elva Gray Tallgrass Prairie
	Millstream* & Janes Bush	Feasby
	Mosa Forest	Miller Sanctuary
	Rondeau Bay Marshes	Myslik
	Rowsom's Tilbury West	Skakel**
	Sharon's Creek	Stirling
	Sinclair's Bush	Tilbury #2 Flood Control
	Two Creeks	Ward
	Walter Devereux**	Well Head
	Big Bend**	
	E.M Warwick	

* Property has a rental house on the property.

** Property has a farm lease associated with the property.

Information regarding each Conservation Area and the activities provided at each location can be found in our *Explore LTVCA Conservation Areas Guide Book*.

8.2 Leased Conservation Lands

In some instances, Conservation Areas are subject to a long or short-term lease agreement between the LTVCA and an individual, a corporation, or a municipality. Through the terms of the lease agreement, the Lessee is typically responsible for the management of these lands, however, these lands may still include public access and active recreation opportunities. Examples of these leases include agricultural lands, the Chatham Leaf and Yard Waste Facility and the Wolfe Creek BMX track.

8.3 Conservation Areas- Active Recreation

Conservation Areas-Active Recreation refers to lands which provide natural habitat protection and/or flood/erosion protection while remaining accessible and open to the public. These lands are well promoted and may contain managed trail networks, parking lots, signage, and facilities. The Authority may actively encourage and facilitate active recreation and have staffed buildings. Typically, these lands include fee for parking, camping, rentals, and/or education. The lands are distinguished from passive recreation lands by the level of development and the intensity of use.

These properties are identified as Category 3 under Ontario Regulation 686/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act for Mandatory Programs and Services. Category 3 programs and services are those that the conservation authority determines are advisable to provide, to further the purposes of the Act. These lands provide active recreation in the form of seasonal and transient campsites and outdoor education opportunities. Additional facilities and programs are on site to serve the needs of visitors to these properties. Financing for these lands is provided through the revenue generated on the property (i.e., camping fees, day-use fees, education program fees, and donations). Funding for these lands is also provided from the member municipalities (municipal levy) through Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) or agreements.

8.4 Conservation Areas- Passive Recreation

Conservation Areas-Passive recreation refers to lands which provide habitat protection and/or flood/erosion protection while permitting public access on a passive basis. These lands include signage, trails, parking lots, and may have facilities such as washrooms. These lands typically are not staffed, but rather visited by staff for maintenance and inspection.

These properties are identified as Category 2 under Ontario Regulation 686/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act for Mandatory Programs and Services. Funding for these lands is provided from member municipalities (municipal levy) through a Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) or agreements.

8.5 Nature Reserves

Nature Reserves refer to lands where public access is prohibited and/or are generally not managed for public access. These lands may serve as resource management areas, agricultural fields, and potential flood lands. These areas typically do not have facilities and/or parking lots. Trail networks, if existing, are simple, minimal, and/or unmaintained. The Trail networks within management areas are for staff personnel only in order to review and manage the property.

These properties are identified as Category 1 under Ontario Regulation 686/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act for Mandatory Programs and Services, which are lands owned or controlled by the Authority for conservation and management. Funding for these lands is provided from member municipalities through municipal levy. The Diversion Channel and the 5th Street Dam is funded annually by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent through a special levy and occasionally by the Province through the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure funding program (WECl) (for capital projects).

8.6 Administration Areas

The LTVCA has one property that falls under Administration Areas. The Chatham Administration building for the LTVCA Conservation Authority, this building is the main administration building and houses the majority of office-based staff.

The Chatham Administration building property falls under Category 1 under Ontario Regulation 686/21 of the Conservation Authorities Act for Mandatory Programs and Services.

Additional staff are located at the Burwell House at the Longwoods Road Conservation Area and the C.M. Wilson Learning Centre. Education staff are located the Longwoods Road Resource Centre and the C. M Wilson Learning Centre. Conservation Land staff are located at the Longwoods Road Conservation Area Workshop and the C.M Wilson Conservation Area Workshop.

8.7 Principles Used to Manage the Conservation Areas

The following general principles are used to manage conservation areas in the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority jurisdiction:

- Conservation Areas are demonstrations of naturalized areas to the public.
- Conservation Area activities may be limited should it be deemed that natural resource are being affected by the scale of human use of the area.

- Maintenance and development of roads, access routes and trails will be planned and performed by staff.
- Archaeological sites associated with past human activities, endeavours or events (including surface artifacts, subsurface attributes) shall be protected from disturbance whenever possible.
- Identified species at risk and their habitat should be mapped and protected from possible disruption by other land uses wherever possible.
- Property boundary fences/markers will be maintained or implemented as needed.
- Conservation and Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program properties will be maintained consistent with their approved management plans.
- Staff may need to manage nuisance wildlife in Conservation Areas.
- Properties are open to research activities relating to natural resource conservation with appropriate restrictions which will be outlined in an agreement between the Authority and researcher.
- Controls in the form of access restrictions such as signage, gates and land use plans may be used to define or limit public use of ecologically sensitive portions of area or for safety concerns.
- The use of remote-controlled vehicles of any kind (e.g. land, air, or watercraft, including drones) are not allowed on Authority property without LTVCA permission.
- Any special event that will require exclusive use or closure of an area to the general public shall require a Facility Rental Permit and a fee based on the Conservation Areas Fee Schedule.
- Hunting may be allowed on CA lands if provided for in an area master plan.

8.8 General Rules for Conservation Areas

Note: more specific rules are defined in literature provided to users.

- Conservation areas are open and available daily from dawn until dusk unless otherwise stated.
- Overnight camping is only permitted at C.M Wilson Conservation Area, Longwoods Road Conservation Area, Big Bend Conservation Area and E.M Warwick Conservation Area. Camping is to be booked through Let's Camp or through the Administrative Office, it is a fee for service and only permitted on regulated camping sites.
- Dogs (pets) are required to be on leash at all times. 'Stoop and scoop' and removal of waste is required.
- Licensed fishing activities are allowed provided they follow Provincial regulations and are not endangering other users of the property.
- Wedding Ceremonies/Special Events will be allowed on site in accordance with rental permits and payment per the Conservation Area Fee Schedule.
- Visitors to these areas should *'take only memories and leave only footprints.'*
- Garbage facilities may not be available at all sites, it is highly encouraged that all activities exercise *'pack in and pack out'* and take all garbage with them.

8.9 Prohibited Activities

The following activities are prohibited on Conservation Area lands (outside of campsites which are governed by specific camping rules):

- Open Fires
- Drug and Alcohol Consumption
- Off leash pets
- Public Nudity
- Indecent Acts
- Bow Fishing
- Target Practice
- Unauthorized Horseback Riding
- Discharge of Firearms (outside of specific permitted use) including Airsoft Guns/ Paintball
- Unauthorized Hunting / Trapping
- Unauthorized camping/ trailers
- Unauthorized motorized vehicles
- Creation of new trails/ structures for mountain bikes
- Unauthorized use of drones
- Littering or dumping of foreign material
- Unauthorized placement of signs
- Unauthorized damage or removal of flora or fauna

8.10 Species at Risk, Invasive Species and Stewardship Programs

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority currently has a Species at Risk (SAR) team along with a Stewardship team. Species at Risk and Invasive Species are identified through studies conducted on conservation authority properties. This information is then mapped and documented for staff’s knowledge additionally this information is shared with government agencies; based on data sharing agreements. The information studied and collected through our SAR and Stewardship Teams can then be tabulated and documented into an Ecological Land Classification documents. This background information is fundamental to properly manage natural systems and is contained in Conservation Area specific Management Plans. The work completed for this planning is supported through signed MOU’s with each Member Municipality, however; funding is often also provided through grant funding, donation or special levy.

9.0 Revenue and Expenses

Revenues are generated for the Conservation Lands are through a paid parking program located at C.M. Wilson Conservation Area, Longwoods Road Conservation Area and Sharon’s Creek Conservation Area. Revenues are also generated through seasonal campsites at CM Wilson and Big Bend, transient camping at CM Wilson and Big Bend and group camping at Longwoods Road and E.M. Warwick. The Authority is committed to utilizing the parking and camping fees to offset operating expenses for the Conservation Areas to enhance the public experience. This may include provision of portable washrooms on seasonally active recreation sites, snow plowing, grass cutting, hazard tree removal, trail repairs, signage and maintenance of access roads and parking areas.

The general maintenance and LTVCA staff time is allocated from revenues and the levy provided by our member Municipalities.

Capital improvements (trail surfacing, shelters, bridges, boardwalks, camping facilities) are funded through special levies, grants, donations, reserves, revenues from the paid parking and camping programs and municipal levy.

10.0 Implementation - Measurable Achievements

Staff have developed a Conservation Area Strategy that includes realistic and measurable achievements broken down into an implementation chart. The chart below gives an outline of the objectives the LTVCA would like to achieve over the 5-year term. The chart lays out the framework for who within the Conservation Authority would maintain ownership of ensuring these objectives are met, the measurement of success, the implementation initiatives, budget implications and the Strategic Plan Connection.

9.1 Implementation Chart

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Measurement</u>	<u>Initiatives</u>	<u>Budget Implications</u>	<u>Strategic Connection</u>
1.	Review and Update Land Acquisition and Land Disposal Policy	CA Land Manager	Completed up to date Policy	Year 2- Review Year 3- Board Approval	Staff time	Partner of Choice
2.	Create Ecological Land Classifications for the CA Lands	SAR Team	Annually completing a number of ELCs based on funding available	Year 1 to 5- completing at least 1 ELC per year based on available funding available for staff time.	Staff time Fuel, Equipment, In-kind for Gants	Healthy and Climate Resilient Watersheds
3.	Create CA specific Conservation Management Plans	CA Land Manager, SAR Team, Lands Team	Annually completing a Land Management Plan per CA	Year 1 to 5- completing at least 1 Land Management Plan per year based on available funding and data	Staff time	Healthy and Climate Resilient Watersheds
4.	Provide equitable access to CA Lands	Communication Team	Distribution of CA Land Passes	Year 1-5 Annually provide a number of passes to each Municipality to host in their libraries Work with DEI groups	Staff time No revenue generated through the donation.	Connecting People to Nature
5.	Review assets annually and update/repair infrastructure	Lands Staff	Asset management plan implementation	Year 1-5 Annually review and update/ repair infrastructure – annual work planning	Staff time Cost per asset updated/repared	Organizational Excellence
6.	Land Acquisition	Lands Staff	Acquire lands close to growing communities to provide access to nature	Continue to work with community to have lands donated in these areas	Staff time, lawyer fees, survey acquisition costs	Connecting People to Nature
7.	Hunting	Lands Staff	Hunting considered in Conservation Area Management Plans	Management Plans	Staff time	Connecting People to Nature

11.0 Conservation Lands Strategy Review

To ensure this document remains current, a review of the Strategy will be conducted every 5 years. The Strategy will be updated, and public consultation requested, when major changes are made to the overall objectives and goals of the Authority, or when new land is acquired. If the Strategy is deemed to be current and accurate, the Board of Directors may approve the Strategy as is for the next 5-year cycle. If updates are necessary, the Board of Directors determine whether public consultation is required as part of the update process.

9.2) Draft LTVCA Asset Management Plan Report

Date: Oct 17, 2024
Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
Subject: Draft LTVCA Asset Management Plan Report
From: Todd Casier, CA, Manager, Corporate Services

Background

An Asset Management Plan (AMP) is a strategic plan for managing an organisation's infrastructure and other assets to deliver an agreed standard of service. Typically, an Asset Management Plan will take a systematic approach - especially where a number of assets are co-dependent and are required to work together to deliver an agreed standard of service. All those involved in providing the service should be part of creating the plan. This ensures that the operational staff and managers agree on the management of assets. In the past, the LTVCA managed assets in a reactive manner allocating funding in annual budgets for asset maintenance and replacement. The new plan will move the organization to planning asset management proactively into the future. This will ensure that the LTVCA has the resources needed to deliver programs and services to our communities.

The LTVCA Asset Management Plan has been in the works for the last 2 years. LTVCA staff had originally planned to complete the plan in 2023. During this period however, the provincial government has made a number of changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and approved a number of regulations that changed the way the LTVCA does business. All these changes have limited the time available to complete the plan on its original timelines. The draft LTVCA Asset Management Plan has now been prepared and staff at the operations level of the organization are continuing to review elements of the plan. A final LTVCA Asset Management Plan will be presented at the December 2024 meeting of the Board of Directors.

It is noted that staff of the LTVCA continually apply for grants to complete capital projects. This practice will continue thereby possibly freeing up funding to address any project overages, oversights or unexpected costs as the asset management plan moves forward.

Elements of the Plan

The Asset Inventory

Background documents used to assess assets included capital asset and insurance inventories (spreadsheets). These inventories were updated and any asset with a value of less than \$2,500 was removed or identified as such. These assets will continue to be managed through annual budget funding. It is noted that computer assets were pooled on an annual replacement basis and included in the asset management plan.

The inventory includes:

1. What the asset is, its age, the major components and their expected useful life
2. What is the condition of the asset or component
3. What the original value of the asset was
4. What the expected life-cycle costs will be
5. What is the expected cost per year for the duration of the 10 years asset management plan

The inventory of assets was prepared based on categorizing of LTVCA Assets. The asset categories, and what they include are described below.

Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas with major assets were evaluated separately. Approximately 10 areas fall into this description. The evaluation included buildings and their components e.g. roofing, flooring, foundation, windows, utilities and finishes

(both inside and outside). Additional assets including recreational structures (e.g. picnic shelters) walkways and decking, platforms, bridges, roads, and trails were included in assessing major capital expenditures. It is noted that ongoing maintenance of these structures will continue to be addressed in the annual budget process. Additionally, the original reconstruction of the Lighthouse at Lighthouse Cove was completed with heritage grants and the asset management plan intends this will be the case going forward.

Flood Control Structures

The four flood control structures assessed in this plan include the McGregor Creek Diversion Channel, the Rivard Dam, the Backwater Dam & Pumping Station and Sharron Creek Dam. The LTVCA has been able to access WECl (Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure) funding from the Ministry of Natural Resources in the past. This funding addresses 50% of flood control structures asset major costs when projects are approved by the ministry. This funding has not been included in the asset management plan as it is uncertain funding will be available for specific projects in the future.

McGregor Creek Diversion Channel

Capital expenditures on the McGregor Creek Diversion Channel will consist of new gates and fencing of the channelization. Ongoing annual maintenance will include mowing and repairs to conveyance elements.

Rivard Dam

Significant work has been carried out on the Rivard Dam in the last two years, with all three actuators being replaced with new equipment. With proper maintenance, no new expenditures on the dam are expected in the next 10 years.

Sixth Street Backwater Dam and Pumping Station

The Backwater Dam & Pumping Station located at Sixth Street has also had significant work completed on them in the last five years. This has included the pulling and rebuilding of three large pumps and structural repairs to abutments of the dam. Major repairs to these pumps will be required again in 2033 and are included in the plan. The emergency large generator sets (three) will have to be replaced due to end of life in 2031.

Sharon Creek Dam

The Sharon Creek Dam gallery is showing some signs of leakage and a structural analysis is required to recommend repairs to the dam structure. The study is scheduled in the plan for 2028. The cost of repairs to the structure is not included in the plan as this is unknown at this time.

Vehicles

It is the practice of the LTVCA to purchase a limited number of new vehicles, relying on purchase of high quality second hand vehicles to ensure safety and cost saving for the fleet. Currently 17 vehicles are in the fleet with the fleet to expand to 20 vehicles to service the new phosphorus reduction plan staff. Administration dollars from the new federal grant will address the purchase of these new vehicles. Use of vehicles range from office work, field work, to large trucks used to pull trailers floating equipment for maintenance and construction purposes. At the end of each year, all vehicles are assessed for upcoming life cycle costs and whether they should be replaced. Input from these assessments has been used in this plan. Included in the vehicle section are eight trailers used for a variety of purposes. Assessment and costing of replacement of these trailers is also included in the plan.

Tractors and Equipment

The LTVCA currently has eight tractors and one backhoe in its inventory. A wide variety of implements for the tractors are also used by the LTVCA. Only implements with a value of over \$2,500 are included in the asset management plan. Additionally, the LTVCA has two ATVs, one side by side, two golf carts and two boats of different sizes (a number with associated trailers) being used by a variety of staff. Included in this section, are commercial lawn mowers (six) and a Ventrac unit used to mow the channelization. Another large group includes eight pumps with discharge piping that are maintained by the LTVCA to assist in dewatering properties following flooding or dike failures.

Program Equipment

Items in this category include equipment valued over \$2,500 used to undertake programs and technical studies. Examples of this include survey units, flow meters, automatic samplers, a variety of gauges and instruments (e.g. tipping bucket rain gauges, soil moisture sensor). Limited funds for these sensors are required as many granting programs provide funding to maintain and replace them.

Office Furniture and Equipment

Over the last few years, significant funds have been used to update office equipment and purchase new office furniture for our expanding staff. Much of this has been completed using administrative funds from grants provided to the LTVCA. No costs for office furniture and equipment has been provided in the asset management plan. It is noted that small upgrades and replacements to furniture and equipment is done through the operating budget as these costs are generally less than \$2,500.

Computer Equipment

The final category in the Asset Management Plan is Computer Equipment. This category includes computers, servers, printers, GPS units and audio visual equipment. Costs are calculated on an annual basis based on a five year life expectancy for computers and servers. The largest single cost in this category is the replacement of the survey grade GPS unit (acquired in 2023) in 2030.

Cost of Asset Management Plan

The LTVCA Asset Management Plan should naturally translate into long-term (5-10 year) financial plan. Although it is a 10 year plan, it is recommended that the plan be reviewed at least every 5 years to ensure it is accurate and up to date going forward. The long-term financial plan will help to determine which expenditures are important and what is needed to maintain LTVCA priority assets over the long term. The plan shows the expected annual costs to maintain the LTVCA's assets and the costs are as follows:

LTVCA Asset Management Plan - Summary of Expenditures												
		Expected Costs by Year										
	Conservation Area	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	
Admin	Admin site	-	-	-	-	45,000	20,000	-	-	-	-	
CM05	Millstream	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CM07	Big Bend	-	-	-	-	-	5,000	-	-	20,000	30,000	
CM14	Longwoods Rd.	24,000	44,000	-	-	-	33,000	-	-	-	-	
CM15	Sharon Creek	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CM21	C.M. Wilson	45,000	6,000	-	5,000	10,000	12,000	17,000	102,000	17,000	-	
CM22	E.M. Warwick	5,000	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CM23	McGeachy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CM24	Two Creeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CM76	Lighthouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Lighthouse Repairs by grant
FCS		-	-	50,000	30,000	50,000	-	210,000	-	-	60,000	
Vehicles		115,000	55,000	40,000	95,000	60,000	110,000	-	35,000	40,000	-	
CA Equipment		22,000	46,000	56,000	51,000	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	
Program Equipment		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34,000	-	
Office Furniture		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Computer Equipment		25,000	20,000	14,900	10,000	10,000	22,000	10,000	16,000	10,000	10,000	
Total		236,000	201,000	160,900	191,000	175,000	202,000	267,000	153,000	121,000	100,000	1,806,900
												180,690

Financial Impact of Asset Management Plan

Finally, the last step is to determine how the LTVCA can afford the recommended plan. In preliminary work developing the LTVCA Asset Management Plan, (March 8, 2024 report to board) staff recommended that the board consider reducing existing surplus funds and reserves along with increasing levy in a modest way. The levy increase was estimated to be 1% per year for 10 years. (2025 to 2034). Although the numbers have changed from the original estimates, the final impact to the LTVCA finances of the plan remain very similar. As levy is increased, reserves are

drawn down until in 2033 the plan is fully funded by levy. The total funds available from reserves and surpluses as of the end of 2023 less committed funds in 2024 capital projects is \$803,218. The total costs to implement the LTVCA Asset Management Plan is \$789,741. Therefore, funds are available to implement the plan.

Financial Impact of Asset Management Plan					
	Asset Requirements				
Year	Costs	Levy (+1%/year)	Remove from Reserves	Resource Centre-Phase 1	
2025	236,000.00	16,610.53	219,389.47	Capital Spent 2024	- 771,241.61
2026	201,000.00	34,051.58	166,948.42	Expenses 2024	- 53,418.84
2027	160,900.00	52,015.87	108,884.13	Feddev 2024	358,286.00
2028	191,000.00	70,519.08	120,480.92		
2029	175,000.00	89,577.39	85,422.61		
2030	202,000.00	109,207.45	92,792.55	LTVCA Expense Phase 1	- 466,374.45
2031	267,000.00	129,426.41	137,573.59		
2032	153,000.00	150,251.94	2,748.06		751,383.00
2033	121,000.00	171,702.24	- 50,702.24		
2034	100,000.00	193,796.04	- 93,796.04	2023 Operating Surplus post Resource Centre Phase 1	285,008.55
				Asset Reserve	518,210.00
	1,806,900.00	1,017,158.54	789,741.46		
				Funds Available for Asset Management Plan	803,218.55

Next Steps

The LTVCA Asset Management Plan is being finalized by staff including reviews of assumptions by operational staff. Some numbers may change in a minor way but it is felt that the draft version is close to final. A final full report will be prepared and brought back to the Board of Directors for approval in its meeting of December 2024.

Recommended Resolution:

That the draft LTVCA Asset Management Plan Report be accepted for information purposes.
And that the final LTVCA Asset Management Plan be brought back to the Board of Directors for approval at its December 2024 meeting,

The reports align with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

4. Improve Transparency and Understanding of Financial Statements

Respectfully Submitted

Todd Casier, CPA CA
Manager, Corporate Services

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO / Secretary Treasurer

9.3) Preliminary 2025 Budget

Date: October 17, 2024
 Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
 Subject: Preliminary Budget Report
 From: Todd Casier, Manager, Corporate Services
 Mark Peacock, P. Eng., C.A.O. / Secretary Treasurer

Background:

In its meeting of August 2024, the Board of Directors of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority was presented with the 2025 preliminary budget assumptions. The Board approved the assumptions and directed staff to prepare the 2025 preliminary budget based on these assumptions and bring it to the October meeting.

As part of the Strategic Plan, staff have developed an Asset Management Plan. The amount for this plan is now included in this budget, from 2019 to 2024 large capital purchases were included in the budget as a first step into the plan.

Budget Changes:

Every year costs increase as suppliers address increases such as inflation and the wage expense increases. Some of the most significant cost increases in 2025 are listed below. The more significant negative and positive impacts to the budget are as follows: (numbers rounded to the nearest \$100)

	Negative impacts on Budget	Difference to Prior Year Budget
1	ECCC Precision Phosphorous Reduction Grant Costs	-\$3,712,600.00
2	New Water Resources Engineer	-\$112,000.00
3	3.9% COLA (2023 CPI) (To maintain current programs)	-\$98,100.00
4	Merit Increase (To maintain current programs)	-\$42,700.00
5	Mandatory Employer Related Cost Increases (To maintain current programs)	-\$10,600.00
6	Increased Administrative Costs as part of ECCC Precision Phosphorous Reduction Grant Costs	-\$78,200.00
7	Increased Conservation Area Staffing and Support	-\$48,700.00
8	Salary Review	-\$20,000.00
9	Asset Management Funding	-\$16,600.00
10	Increased Insurance Costs	-\$8,500.00
11	Increased Property Taxes	-\$6,600.00
	Total Negative Impact on Budget	-\$4,154,600.00
	Positive Impacts on Budget	
1	ECCC Precision Phosphorous Reduction Grant Costs	\$4,046,700.00
	Total Positive Impacts on Budget	\$4,046,700.00
	Net Change	-\$107,900.00
	Levy Increase	\$107,900.00
	Total Change	\$0.00

2024 Budget

The LTVCA Board approved a 2024 budget of \$4,356,094, resulting in a general levy of \$1,661,053 plus a special levy of \$205,000 for Chatham-Kent for Flood Control Structures and the Greening Partnership/Natural Heritage Programs.

Proposed 2025 Budget

For 2025, the preliminary balanced budget of \$8,175,032 requires a general levy of \$1,760,716, an increase of \$99,663 over the 2024 general levy, or 6.00% (Chatham-Kent's special benefiting levy increasing \$8,200 to \$213,200). The total municipal levy for 2025 is \$1,973,916. As in previous years, the annual adjustment to each municipality's assessment within the watershed varies, the resulting change in the levy ranging from 3.83% to 72.84%. The current value property assessment values are provided annually by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and are beyond the ability of the Conservation Authority to modify.

Non-municipal revenues include grants and general revenues (user fees) and account for \$6,201,116 or 75.9% of total program revenues. This is up from \$2,490,041 or 57.2% in 2024. Most of the large increase from the prior year is from the ECCC Precision Phosphorous Reduction grant. Non-municipal funds are required for a number of programs, the most variable of which is the Conservation Services/Stewardship programs, which is heavily dependent on the success of numerous funding applications. Staff are constantly engaged in developing new sources and extending current contracts to meet the demand for services and to take advantage of emerging priorities such as phosphorus reduction.

Recommendation:

That the 2025 preliminary budget totalling \$8,175,032 be approved and that the member municipalities be advised of the budget and their share of the proposed levy as calculated; it being noted that the Authority is required to provide 30 days' notice of its intention to adopt a final budget and levy.

And that the final 2025 Budget be brought to the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2025 for approval.

The reports align with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

4. Improve Transparency and Understanding of Financial Statements

Respectfully Submitted

Recommended by:
Todd Casier, CPA, CA,
Manager, Corporate Services

Reviewed by:
Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO / Secretary-Treasurer

**Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
2025 PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

Object	COMBINED		CATEGORY 1		CATEGORY 2		CATEGORY 3	
	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2025 Budget
Expenditures								
FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURES	173,809	203,740	173,809	203,740	-	-	-	-
EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES	10	9	10	9	-	-	-	-
FLOOD FORECASTING AND WARNING	106,545	101,191	106,545	101,191	-	-	-	-
TECHNICAL STUDIES	102,687	179,247	102,687	179,247	-	-	-	-
PLANNING & REGULATIONS	386,983	422,185	386,983	422,185	-	-	-	-
WATERSHED MONITORING	123,621	154,426	118,571	150,026	-	-	5,050	4,400
SOURCE PROTECTION	23,882	25,733	23,882	25,733	-	-	-	-
THAMES MOUTH DEBRIS REMOVAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CONSERVATION AREAS	674,081	792,276	510,591	612,877	-	-	163,490	179,399
COMMUNITY RELATIONS	142,735	135,861	142,735	135,861	-	-	-	-
CONSERVATION EDUCATION	113,297	122,403	-	-	-	-	113,297	122,403
SKA-NAH-DOHT VILLAGE	124,702	115,422	-	-	-	-	124,702	115,422
CONSERVATION SERVICES (FORESTRY)	172,398	223,657	-	-	-	-	172,398	223,657
CHATHAM-KENT GREENING PROJECT	517,898	531,352	-	-	80,000	83,200	437,898	448,152
PHOSPHORUS REDUCTION	923,336	4,310,506	-	-	-	-	923,336	4,310,506
SPECIES AT RISK	171,028	112,356	-	-	-	-	171,028	112,356
ADMINISTRATION	599,082	728,058	599,082	728,058	-	-	-	-
ASSET MANAGEMENT	-	16,610	-	16,610	-	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recovered Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	4,356,094	8,175,032	2,164,895	2,575,537	80,000	83,200	2,111,199	5,516,295
Revenues								
Other Taxation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Government Grants & Subsidies	(1,468,581)	(5,368,352)	(217,485)	(268,288)	-	-	(1,251,096)	(5,100,064)
User Fees	(1,021,460)	(832,764)	(297,150)	(297,200)	-	-	(724,310)	(535,564)
Other Municipal Revenues	(205,000)	(213,200)	(125,000)	(130,000)	(80,000)	(83,200)	-	-
Total Revenues	(2,695,041)	(6,414,316)	(639,635)	(695,488)	(80,000)	(83,200)	(1,975,406)	(5,635,628)
Total Net Budget	1,661,053	1,760,716	1,525,260	1,880,049	-	-	135,793	(119,333)
Net Inc. / (Dec.) \$		99,663						
Net Inc. / (Dec.) %	0	6.0%						

LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Levy for 2025 using Modified CVA

	Current Value Assessment (Modified CVA)	% of Levy	C-K Flood Control, Greening Levy 2025	Non- Matching Levy 2025	Matching Levy 2025	Total General Levy 2025	Total Municipal Levy 2025	Total Municipal Levy 2024	\$ Change from 2024 Levy	% Change from 2024
Dutton-Dunwich M	576,459,862	3.6834%	0	61,853	3,001	64,854	64,854	61,711	3,143	5.09%
Southwold Tp	295,805,737	1.8901%	0	31,739	1,540	33,279	33,279	19,254	14,025	72.84%
West Elgin M	653,273,036	4.1742%	0	70,095	3,401	73,496	73,496	70,721	2,775	3.92%
Lakeshore M	1,501,140,854	9.5918%	0	161,070	7,814	168,884	168,884	159,246	9,638	6.05%
Leamington M	375,548,669	2.3996%	0	40,296	1,955	42,251	42,251	39,996	2,255	5.64%
Chatham-Kent M	8,741,988,584	55.8582%	213,200	937,998	45,506	983,504	1,196,704	1,141,587	55,117	4.83%
London C	1,809,144,305	11.5598%	0	194,118	9,417	203,535	203,535	192,412	11,123	5.78%
Middlesex Centre M	272,671,822	1.7423%	0	29,257	1,419	30,676	30,676	28,650	2,026	7.07%
Southwest Middlesex M	452,470,347	2.8911%	0	48,549	2,355	50,904	50,904	49,028	1,876	3.83%
Strathroy - Caradoc M	971,816,576	6.2096%	0	104,274	5,059	109,333	109,333	103,447	5,886	5.69%
TOTAL	15,650,319,792	100%	\$213,200	\$1,679,249	\$81,467	\$1,760,716	\$1,973,916	\$1,866,053	\$107,863	5.78%

LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY 2025 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
<u>WATER MANAGEMENT</u>					
<u>FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURES</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	130,766	160,049	160,049		
OPERATIONS	29,998	30,309	30,309		
ROUTINE MAINTENANCE	6,945	13,282	13,282		
PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE	6,100	100	100		
TOTAL FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURES	173,809	203,740	203,740	0	0
 <u>EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS					
OPERATIONS	10	9	9		
TOTAL EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES	10	9	9	0	0
 <u>FLOOD FORECASTING AND WARNING</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	88,955	83,221	83,221		
DATA COLLECTIONS	12,176	12,140	12,140		
FLOOD FORECASTING	1,850	2,270	2,270		
COMMUNICATIONS	1,400	1,400	1,400		
OPERATIONS CENTRE (RENT)	550	550	550		
FLOOD RESPONSE AND MONITORING	1,614	1,610	1,610		
TOTAL FLOOD FORECASTING & WARNING	106,545	101,191	101,191	0	0

LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY 2025 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
<u>TECHNICAL STUDIES</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	98,237	173,527	173,527		
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY & MAPPING	0	0	0		
OPERATING-MATERIALS, SUPPLIES, AND EXPENSES	4,450	5,720	5,720		
TOTAL TECHNICAL STUDIES	102,687	179,247	179,247	0	0
<u>REGULATIONS AND PLAN REVIEW</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	343,349	370,596	370,596		
OPERATING-MATERIALS, SUPPLIES, AND EXPENSES	43,634	51,589	51,589		
TOTAL REGS. & PLAN REVIEW	386,983	422,185	422,185	0	0
<u>WATERSHED MONITORING</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	74,239	104,800	104,800		
OPERATING-MATERIALS, SUPPLIES, AND EXPENSES	49,382	49,626	45,226		4,400
TOTAL REGS. & PLAN REVIEW	123,621	154,426	150,026	0	4,400
<u>SOURCE PROTECTION</u>					
THAMES MOUTH DEBRIS REMOVAL	0	0	0		

LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY 2025 PRELIMINARY BUDGET

	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
<u>CONSERVATION & RECREATION PROPERTIES</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	360,065	442,744	360,118		82,626
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, STORAGE, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	314,016	349,532	252,759		96,773
TOTAL CONS. & RECREATION PROPERTIES	674,081	792,276	612,877	0	179,399
<u>COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND EDUCATION</u>					
<u>COMMUNITY RELATIONS</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	133,135	126,261	126,261		
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, SERVICES, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	9,600	9,600	9,600		
TOTAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS	142,735	135,861	135,861	0	0
<u>CONSERVATION EDUCATION</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	106,035	114,143			114,143
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, SERVICES, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	7,262	8,260			8,260
TOTAL CONSERVATION EDUCATION	113,297	122,403	0	0	122,403
<u>SKA-NAH-DOHT VILLAGE</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	116,632	107,402			107,402
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, SERVICES, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	8,070	8,020			8,020
TOTAL SKA-NAH-DOHT VILLAGE	124,702	115,422	0	0	115,422

**LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
2025 PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
<u>CONSERVATION SERVICES/STEWARDSHIP</u>					
<u>CONSERVATION SERVICES (FORESTRY)</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	126,008	174,669			174,669
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, STORAGE, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	46,390	48,988			48,988
TOTAL FORESTRY	172,398	223,657	0	0	223,657
<u>CHATHAM-KENT GREENING PROJECT</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	244,380	233,134		83,200	149,934
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, STORAGE, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	273,518	298,218			298,218
TOTAL CHATHAM-KENT GREENING	517,898	531,352	0	83,200	448,152
<u>PHOSPHORUS</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	476,200	901,037			901,037
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, STORAGE, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	447,136	3,409,469			3,409,469
TOTAL PHOSPHORUS	923,336	4,310,506	0	0	4,310,506

**LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
2025 PRELIMINARY BUDGET**

	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET	CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3
<u>SPECIES AT RISK</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	162,028	100,851			100,851
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, STORAGE, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	9,000	11,505			11,505
TOTAL CONS. SERVICES	171,028	112,356	0	0	112,356
 <u>ADMINISTRATION</u>					
WAGES AND BENEFITS	423,856	470,353	470,353		
OPERATING- MATERIALS & SUPPLIES, STORAGE, RENTALS, INSURANCE, ETC.	175,226	257,705	257,705		
TOTAL CONS. & RECREATION PROPERTIES	599,082	728,058	728,058	0	0
 ASSET MANAGEMENT		16,610	16,610		

9.4) Appointment of Auditor

Date: October 17, 2024
Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
Subject: **Audit Services 2024 - 2028**
From: Todd Casier, CPA, CA, Manager, Corporate Services

Background:

At the 2024 General Meeting the board passed the following motion:

“Moved that the Board of Directors direct staff to undertake a competitive bid process to obtain Auditing services for the 2024 fiscal year and provide results of the bids to the Board for its decision at a subsequent board meeting”

On a period basis (generally every 5 years) Conservation Authorities send out a request for quotes (RFQ) for the year-end auditing services. At the direction of the Board, staff sent it to four accounting firms in the watershed on June 27, 2024 with a response date of July 31, 2024. The LTVCA received two quotes as requested by the proposal, one submission with no quote and stating “billed as the work progresses, are based on our standard hourly rates”, we did not receive a reply from the fourth firm.

Below is the table of the final quotes received:

Year End

Audit Firm	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
BDO	19,500	20,800	22,000	23,500	25,000	110,800
Inclusive of HST	22,035	23,504	24,860	26,555	28,250	125,204

Audit Firm	2,024	2,025	2,026	2,027	2,028	Total
Baker Tilly	16,500	17,000	17,500	18,000	18,500	87,500
Inclusive of HST	18,645	19,210	19,775	20,340	20,905	98,875

Difference	3,000	3,800	4,500	5,500	6,500	23,300
Inclusive of HST	3,390	4,294	5,085	6,215	7,345	26,329

Financial staff at the Conservation Authority reviewed the subsequent quotes and both were determined to meet the requirements of the quote request. In turn, the recommendation for award is based on the lowest cost bid.

It should be noted that the auditor is appointed annually as required by section 38 of Conservation Authorities Act and Section B.7 of the approved LTVCA Admin By-Law 2018-01.

Recommendation:

That the Board of Directors accept the quote provided by Baker Tilly, for audit services for the years 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028; and

That the firm of Baker Tilly be appointed as the auditor of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority until the next annual meeting in February 2025.

The reports align with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

4. Improve Transparency and Understanding of Financial Statements

Recommended by:

Todd Casier, CPA, CA,
Manager, Corporate Services

Reviewed by:

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO / Secretary-Treasurer

9.5) Income and Expenditure vs Budget to August 31, 2024

Date: October 17, 2024
 Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
 Subject: **Income and Expenditure vs Budget to August 31, 2024**
 From: Todd Casier, CPA, CA, Manager, Corporate Services

Background:

Review the 2024 Budget to the Revenue and Expenditures for the 8 months ended August 31, 2024.

REVENUE	2024 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET AUG PROJECTED		2024 ACTUAL TO AUG 30	\$ VARIANCE TO PROJECTED
GRANTS	1,468,581	1,097,618	*	2,103,215	1,005,597
GENERAL LEVY	1,661,053	1,661,053	^	1,612,948	(48,105)
DIRECT SPECIAL BENEFIT	205,000	205,000	^	205,000	0
GENERAL REVENUES	1,021,460	562,409	*	611,487	49,078
FOUNDATION GRANTS & REVENUES	0	0	*	0	0
RESERVES	0	0	*	0	0
CASH FUNDING	4,356,094	3,526,080		4,532,650	1,006,570
OTHER	0	0		0	0
TOTAL FUNDING	4,356,094	3,526,080		4,532,650	1,006,570

*-based on a 8 of 12 month proration of the budget

^-based on cash received to date

Grant income is greater than budgeted due to the reversal of deferred revenue for ongoing programs, the timing of grants invoiced and increased or new grants including increased or new grants for the Resource Centre Rebuild and Elevator, PWQMN Gap Analysis, Mosa and Fennell CA, Conservation Education, Stewardship and Species at Risk.

Note: Grant income is based on funds received/invoiced and not matched to expenses, meaning there may be expenses outstanding and not recognized in the attached expense statement. At year-end, each grant is reviewed individually, spent funds for grant programs not invoiced are set-up as receivables and added to grant income, unspent funds are reduced from grant income and deferred for future expenditures.

Levy revenue is shown on a cash basis. The following municipalities are paid in full as of October 10th, 2024: Chatham-Kent, Dutton/Dunwich, Lakeshore, Leamington, Middlesex Centre, Southwold, Strathroy-Caradoc, Southwest Middlesex and West Elgin.

General Revenue is above budget due to the following factors:

- Conservation Areas is above budget due to receiving seasonal camping revenue and payment for repairs to Longwoods CA, Conservation Services and Chatham Kent Greening Project are above budget as tree planting is done and landowners have been billed and interest income is above budget due to increased interest rates.

Foundation Grants and Revenues budget are zero because of the uncertainty of funds available.

Reserves are zero as this account is used to balance the accounts at year-end if expenses are greater than revenues.

EXPENSES	2024 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET AUG PROJECTED	2024 ACTUAL TO AUG 30	\$ VARIANCE TO PROJECTED
WATER MANAGEMENT				
FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURES	201,524	134,349	146,580	12,231
EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES	12	8	10	2
FLOOD FORECASTING AND WARNING	123,534	82,356	63,454	(18,902)
TECHNICAL STUDIES	119,061	79,374	63,752	(15,622)
PLANNING & REGULATIONS	448,690	299,127	276,100	(23,027)
WATERSHED MONITORING (PGMN)	143,333	95,555	107,985	12,430
SOURCE PROTECTION	27,690	18,460	23,768	5,308
THAMES MOUTH DEBRIS REMOVAL	0	0	0	0
Water Management Subtotal	1,063,844	709,229	681,649	(27,580)
CONSERVATION & RECREATION PROPERTIES				
CONSERVATION AREAS	781,568	521,045	663,280	142,235
COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND EDUCATION				
COMMUNITY RELATIONS	165,495	110,330	70,334	(39,996)
CONSERVATION EDUCATION	131,363	87,576	73,969	(13,607)
SKA-NAH-DOHT VILLAGE	144,587	96,391	55,864	(40,527)
Community Relations & Education Subtotal	441,445	294,297	200,167	(94,130)
CONSERVATION SERVICES/STEWARDSHIP				
CONSERVATION SERVICES (FORESTRY)	199,888	133,259	172,002	38,743
CHATHAM-KENT GREENING PROJECT	600,481	400,321	435,269	34,948
PHOSPHORUS REDUCTION	1,070,568	713,712	576,235	(137,477)
SPECIES AT RISK	198,300	132,200	164,731	32,531
Conservation Services/Stewardship Subtotal	2,069,237	1,379,492	1,348,237	(31,255)
CAPITAL/MISCELLANEOUS				
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING	0	0	0	0
REPAIRS/UPGRADES	0	0	0	0
UNION GAS CENTENNIAL PROJECT	0	0	0	0
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS (FED/PROV)	0	0	0	0
Capital/Miscellaneous Subtotal	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	4,356,094	2,904,063	2,893,333	(10,730)

Water Management

Flood Control Structures are slightly above budget due to work and time spent by staff working on the structures.

Erosion Control Structures are comparable to budget.

Flood Forecasting and Warning expenses are below budget due to several large annual invoices received later in the year and staff time spent in other areas.

Technical Studies are below budget due to applicable staff spending increased time in other areas.

Planning and Regulations are below budget due some larger expenses incurred later in the year and staff time spent in other areas.

Watershed Monitoring is slightly above budget due to the costs related an increase the PWQMN grant.

Source Protection is comparable to budget.

Conservation Areas

Conservation area expenses are above budget due the costs of opening of the Conservation Area campgrounds, work on the Resource Centre and repairs to the roads paid by Magic of Lights and work to Mosa and Fennell CAs from grant funding.

Community Relations and Education

Community Relations, Conservation Education and Ska-Nah-Doht Museum and Village are below budget due to staff spending time in other programs, one staff on leave and the departure of an Educator.

Conservation Services/Stewardship

Conservation Services (Forestry) and Chatham-Kent Greening expenses are above budget as most large activities, like tree and prairie planting, and the related expenses have been completed.

Phosphorous Reduction is below budget as most activities and related expenses are completed during the summer months and Cover Crop/Precision Agriculture expenditures have not started.

Species at Risk is above budget due to March 31 year-end budget expenditures.

Capital/Miscellaneous

No Capital/Miscellaneous expenses to date.

Summary:

	2024 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET AUG PROJECTED	2024 ACTUAL TO AUG 30	\$ VARIANCE TO PROJECTED
TOTAL CASH FUNDING	4,356,094	3,526,080	4,532,650	1,006,570
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	4,356,094	2,904,063	2,893,333	(10,730)
OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	0	622,017	1,639,317	1,017,300

At August 31, 2024, LTVCA's operating surplus is favourable due to increased grant and general revenue over budget and some positions not being filled for the full year.

Note: The difference between the projected budget funding and projected budget expenditures is due to the recognition of the annual General Levy and Special Levy versus all other income and expenses are prorated for the period.

Recommendation: That the Board of Directors receives the Budget vs Revenue and Expenditures report for the period ended August 31, 2024.

The reports align with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

4. Improve Transparency and Understanding of Financial Statements

Respectfully Submitted
Todd Casier, CPA, CA
Manager, Corporate Services

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
C.A.O. / Secretary Treasurer

9.6) 2025 Conservation Areas Fee Schedule

The 2025 fee schedule has been updated with increased rates for seasonal camping and a change to the hall usage rates to allow for a 50% discount to be applied to our Member Municipalities, Indigenous Groups and Partners, Educators and Supporting Community Groups.

Item	2024 Rate	Proposed Rate
2025 CA Parking Pass	\$60/ two for \$90	\$65/ two for \$100
Seasonal Camper – Premium Sites	\$2200	\$2300
Seasonal Camper - Unserviced	\$1800	\$1900
Monthly - Premium Sites	\$700	\$725
CM Wilson Learning Centre Rental Rates		
Educational Rental (Member Municipalities/ Indigenous Groups/ Educators/ Supporting Community Groups)	\$250	\$250
Boardroom	\$250	\$150
Longwoods Road Indigenous Education Centre Rates		
Hall	\$750	\$750
Hall Educational Rental (Member Municipalities/ Indigenous Groups/ Educators/ Supporting Community Groups)	N/A	\$350
Full Facility	\$1000	\$1000
Full Facility Educational Rental (Member Municipalities/ Indigenous Groups/ Educators/ Supporting Community Groups)	N/A	\$500

Below is the new rate schedule.

Recommendation:

That the LTVCA Board of Directors approve the 2025 Conservation Areas Fee Schedule.

The report aligns with the following objectives of the LTVCA’s Strategic Plan:

Customer/Stakeholder Objectives

4) Improve Transparency and Understanding of Financial Statements

Respectfully Submitted

Genevieve Champagne, BLA
Manager, Conservation Lands and Services

Reviewed by:

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.

CAO / Secretary-Treasurer

**Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
2025 Conservation Areas Fee Schedule**

ALL PRICES INCLUDE HST

	Longwoods Road	Big Bend	CM Wilson	EM Warwick	Sharon Creek
Camping (Single Sites [‡])		✓	✓		
Group Camping	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Seasonal Camping		✓	✓		
Pavilion/Area Rental	✓	✓	✓		✓
Day Use Fee	✓ coin or credit card		✓ coin or credit card		✓ Passport Canada
2025 CA Parking Pass	✓		✓		✓

Day Use Parking Passes

Vehicle Permit	\$5 per day
Bus	\$110 per day
2025 CA Parking Pass	\$65 each, or two for \$100

<u>Camping[‡]</u>	<i>Nightly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Season (Victoria Day - Thanksgiving)</i>
Premium Sites	\$40	\$725	\$2300 (other fees may apply)
<i>Hydro & Water/Waterfront Sites [Big Bend]</i>			
Hydro Only	\$38		
Unserviced	\$32		\$1900 (other fees may apply)
Extra Overnight Vehicle	\$5 per night		
Group Camping	\$100 per night		
Winter Storage of Camper	\$250 (Thanksgiving – Victoria Day [CM Wilson Only])		
Firewood	\$10/bag		

Big Bend Hunt Camp[‡] – Weekly Rates Only (Designated season)

Serviced (Hydro only)	\$300
Unserviced	\$250
Firewood	\$10/bag or 75 per ½ face cord

<u>EM Warwick*</u>	<i>Weekends/night</i>	<i>Fri & Sat bundle</i>	<i>Sun-Thurs/night</i>	<i>Weekly</i>
<i>(Includes all buildings)</i>				
Year-Round	\$450	\$700	\$250	\$1100
Scouts/Cadets/Guides (Nov-Apr)	\$250	\$450	\$150	\$750
Reservation Deposit*	50% of total bill due at time of booking (\$250 of which non-refundable without 30 days' notice)			
Firewood	\$75 per ½ face cord			
Excess Garbage	\$50 per additional bag if over 4-bag limit			

Other

Non-Camper Sewage Disposal	\$50 (CM Wilson Only, May-Oct)
Cleaning Fee	\$150 first hour, 50/hour thereafter

Rentals*

Per day, excludes parking where applicable (Guests must use Pay & Display machine OR Purchase permits in advance)

Pavilion/Area Rental	\$100 (for outdoor and pavilion weddings \$200 consultation fee also applies)
Barn (CM Wilson)	\$250 (50% of total bill due at time of booking (\$125 of which non-refundable without 30 days' notice))
Per 25 Vehicle Permits	\$ 50
Wedding Consultation Fee	\$200 (includes one CA Parking Pass for couple as well as staff time to meet with couple to discuss event set up, layout, policies, procedures and health and safety)

CM Wilson Learning Centre[†]

Hall Rental	\$500 per day
Education Rental	\$250 per day (available for Member Municipalities, Indigenous Groups, Educators, Supporting Community Groups)
Boardroom	\$150 per day

[‡] Includes one vehicle per site; Let's Camp processing Fee additional

*Requires \$150 Security/Damage Deposit, to be refunded if applicable (Facility, Low Risk Event, Key Sign-out)

† Requires \$500 Security/Damage Deposit, to be refunded if applicable (Facility, High Risk Event, Key Sign-out)

Prices are subject to change

* Reservation deposit applied to total bill

Longwoods Road- Indigenous Education Centre†

Hall Rental	\$750 per day
Education Rental	\$350 per day (available for Member Municipalities, Indigenous Groups, Educators, Supporting Community Groups)
Full Facility	\$1000 per day (Includes use of the hall and kitchen- upper floor is excluded).
Education Full Facility	\$500 per day (Includes use of the hall and kitchen- upper floor is excluded).

Wedding Packages

CM Wilson Barn Wedding Package†

- \$1000 Includes:
- Use of outdoor area for ceremony and photos, additional fees may apply for tents in outdoor area
 - Occupancy for the Hall is between 40-60 depending on seating arrangements.
 - Parking for 25 vehicles, one CA Parking Pass for couple
 - Additional Parking Pass set can be purchased
 - Access to setup day before at 2:00 pm, including access to host rehearsal dinner
 - Teardown before 1:00 pm day after, including access to host brunch
 - 50% of total bill due at time of booking (\$250 of which non-refundable without 30 days' notice)

CM Wilson Learning Centre Wedding Package†

- \$2000 Includes:
- Use of outdoor area for ceremony and photos, additional fees may apply for tents in outdoor area
 - Includes use of the full facility (Hall, Boardroom, Washrooms, Small Kitchen)
 - Occupancy for the Hall is between 70-90 depending on seating arrangements.
 - Parking for 25 vehicles, one CA Parking Pass for couple
 - Additional Parking Pass sets can be purchased
 - Access to setup day before at 2:00 pm, including access to host rehearsal dinner
 - Teardown before 1:00 pm day after.
 - 50% of total bill due at time of booking (\$250 of which non-refundable without 30 days' notice)

Longwoods Road- Indigenous Education Centre Hall Wedding Package†

- \$3000 Includes:
- Use of outdoor area for ceremony and photos, additional fees may apply for tents in outdoor area
 - Includes use of the facility (Hall, Washrooms, Catering Kitchen)
 - Occupancy for the Hall is between 100-190 depending on seating arrangements.
 - Parking for 25 vehicles, one CA Parking Pass for couple
 - Additional Parking Pass sets can be purchased
 - Access to setup day before at 2:00 pm, including access to host rehearsal dinner
 - Teardown before 1:00 pm day after.
 - 50% of total bill due at time of booking (\$250 of which non-refundable without 30 days' notice)

Documentation required for events with Alcohol:

- Signed Rental Agreement
- AGCO Special Occasion Permit (SOP)
- Proof of Security
- Events by Organizations or events with Alcohol are to provide a Certificate of Insurance
 - Must name LTVCA as additionally insured
 - 2 Million Dollar Liability

‡ Includes one vehicle per site; Let's Camp processing Fee additional
*Requires \$150 Security/Damage Deposit, to be refunded if applicable (Facility, Low Risk Event, Key Sign-out)
† Requires \$500 Security/Damage Deposit, to be refunded if applicable (Facility, High Risk Event, Key Sign-out)

Prices are subject to change

* Reservation deposit applied to total bill

9.7) Chatham-Kent Community Foundation Conservation Grant Application

Date: October 18 2024
Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
Subject: Chatham-Kent Community Foundation Grant Application
From: Greg Van Every, Conservation Services Coordinator

Background

An application has been made to the Chatham-Kent Community Foundation:

Project Description: *This project is focused in the community of Ridgetown in East Kent and will allow the LTVCA to develop better outreach through our website by improving design. Two vectors of getting trees to the community will be employed. Approximately 150 native Carolinian trees roughly 150cm in height will be purchased for the Trees Memorial Forest and for the citizens of the area to plant on their own properties. Having landowners plant on their own properties assures sustained maintenance of the trees and educates landowners on the value of native species. Half of these trees will go toward the Trees Memorial Forest and volunteers from Ridgetown Rotary and the Ridgetown Horticultural Society will plant the trees. \$8200 requested*

Recommended Resolution:

That the Board of Directors approves the Chatham-Kent Community Foundation project entitled “Trees for East Kent” and authorizes the chair to sign the application forms.

The report aligns with the following objectives of the LTVCA’s Strategic Plan:

1. Strengthen and Increase Collaboration with Community Stakeholders

Respectfully Submitted

Greg Van Every,
Conservation Services Coordinator

Reviewed by:
Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO / Secretary-Treasurer

10. Business for Information

10.1) The Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program

Date: October 17, 2024
Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
Subject: The Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program Report
From: Donna Small, Agricultural Program Coordinator

Background

The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) has secured a four-year funding agreement with Environment and Climate Change Canada through the Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative for Toxic and Nuisance Algae. The approved project will be delivered by the Agricultural Services staff and is titled The Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program. From 2024-2028, \$13,000,000.00 in funding will be provided.

Project Details

The purpose of the project is to support the agricultural sector in reducing non-point source agriculture nutrient loads within the Lower Thames River watershed resulting in reductions of phosphorus and overall nutrient loads to Lake Erie. The multi-part project will deliver a BMP implementation program, a monitoring program and an outreach and education program.

BMP Implementation Program

The LTVCA will deliver an agricultural Best Management Practice cost-share and contribution program to provide agricultural producers within the LTVCA watershed assistance in offsetting the cost associated with implementing a suite of agricultural BMPs. Furthermore, LTVCA staff and qualified agricultural consultants will work with producers to provide the required technical expertise to effectively implement field specific BMPs to reduce nutrient loadings. Key practices include Cover Crops, 4R Nutrient Management Planning, Conservation Tillage and Erosion Control Structures. Through field site visits and producer meetings, LTVCA staff will assist with planning and implementing projects with producers to address their operation and field characteristics specific challenges in terms of soil health and water management.

Monitoring Program

The monitoring program will collect land management, water quality and water quantity data. The collection of land management data will be used to identify the agricultural management practices that are currently in place within the watershed. This data is of particular significance as management of the soil in subwatersheds will dictate how vulnerable the agricultural land is to winter/spring erosion and nutrient loading. Over the four-year study, water monitoring will be conducted in four high-priority subwatersheds to quantify annual nutrient loads. The project will involve monthly and random sampling, with multiple monitoring stations set up across the watershed to gather vital data on phosphorus levels.

Outreach and Education

A series of outreach and education initiatives will be launched to raise awareness about nuisance algal blooms in the Lake Erie Basin, with a particular emphasis on the Thames River watershed. These initiatives aim to educate agricultural producers on the causes of algal blooms and the timing and sources of nutrient loading. Additionally, the outreach will provide producers with information on BMPs that can be adopted to mitigate nutrient runoff and highlight Conservation Authority (CA) programs available to assist in the implementation of these practices.

Budget Details

The following table shows the budget details of the program:

Project Costs		TOTAL		
Cost Detail	Cost Category	Cash	In-Kind	All Funding
Program Staffing (Program Coordinator; Best Management Practice Specialist (x2); Agricultural Administration Assistant; Agricultural Outreach Specialist; Water Quality Specialist; Water Quality Technician; Watershed Monitoring Specialist)	Salaries and Wages	2,138,545		2,138,545
Best Management Practice Program - Funding directly to landowners for best management practice adoption	Further Disbursement of ECCC Funding to Final Recipients	8,506,955		8,506,955
Outreach and Education - Materials and supplies; events and conferences; website, database, and video development	Printing, production, and distribution expenditures	249,500		249,500
Water Quality Monitoring - Equipment; water laboratory development	Material and supplies expenditures	235,000		235,000
Water Quality Monitoring - Subscriptions and software (Zentra Cloud, HOBOWare, ISCO Telemetry, WISKI)	Other expenditures	20,000		20,000
Water Quality Monitoring - Laboratory analysis	Contractors	400,000	238,000	638,000
Mileage and travel expenses for activities directly related to the project	Travel	130,000		130,000
Administrative costs of carrying out the project not included as part of other expenditures	Overhead	1,320,000	431,015	1,751,015
Total Project Funding		13,000,000	669,015	13,669,015

Recommended Resolution:

That the Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program Report be received for information purposes.

The report aligns with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

1. Strengthen and Increase Collaboration with Community Stakeholders

Respectfully Submitted

Donna Small

Agricultural Program Coordinator

Reviewed by:

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.

CAO / Secretary-Treasurer

10.2) CAO / Secretary Treasurer Report

Date: October 17, 2024
 Memo to: LTVCA Board of Directors
 Subject: CAO /Secretary-Treasurer Report
 From: Mark Peacock, P. Eng., CAO / Secretary Treasurer

Major Planning Documents Required to be Prepared and Approved by December 31, 2024

Much of the work of management staff over the last 2 months has been the preparation and circulation of documents required by the Province of Ontario. The Province of Ontario has passed revisions to the Conservation Authorities Act and associated regulations requiring Conservation Authorities to prepare a number of documents by the end of December 2024. The documents and their status are listed below.

Name of Document	Status	Presented to Board	Final Approval by Board
LTVCA Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy	Currently being presented to councils and available for public review	August 2024	December 2024
LTVCA Conservation Lands Strategy	Draft Plan prepared with public review in Oct and Nov	April, October 2024	December 2024
LTVCA Asset Management Plan	Draft details to October Board meeting with operational staff review ongoing	March and October 2024	December 2024
LTVCA Ice Management Plan	Plan being prepared	December 2024*	December 2024
LTVCA Flood Control Structures Operations Plan	Plan being prepared	December 2024*	December 2024

*The LTVCA Ice Management Plan and the LTVCA Flood Control Structures Operations Plan are technical documents that consist of collecting existing documents and assembling them into the new format. No new information will be contained in these documents.

Lower Thames River Watershed Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program

In September, LTVCA Agricultural Program staff were approved by Environment and Climate Change Canada to move forward with hiring of staff to deliver this program. Seven new staff positions have or will be hired in this program. These new staff and status of hiring are as follows:

1. Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program Co-ordinator (hired)
2. Water Quality Technician (interviews ongoing)
3. Agricultural Stewardship Specialist -Eastern District (interviews ongoing)
4. Agricultural Stewardship Specialist -Western District (interviews ongoing)
5. Water Resource Analyst
6. Agricultural Program Administrative Assistant (Hired, starts Oct 21)
7. Agricultural Outreach and Communications Technician (Hired, starts Oct 21)

Additional office space will be created through administrative funds available from the grant. This will be accomplished by converting the shop area of the C.M. Wilson Learning Centre into a monitoring office and creating an office at Burwell House in the Longwoods Road Conservation Area for the program.

Longwoods Road Resource Centre Revitalization and Indigenous Learning Centre Revitalization

Work is being completed on the first phase of the revitalization project. Delays have occurred as the LTVCA works with suppliers to obtain backordered piping and dry hydrants for the fire reservoir as required by the municipality. Although the facility is not ready for use, all outstanding issues are being addressed and the occupancy permit is expected in the next few weeks.

The next phase which includes installation of the LULA elevator and elevator lobby, conversion of a make shift office area into gallery space and rebuilding of public washrooms is moving forward. A final drawing set has been reviewed and approved by staff. The building permit has been applied for and tender documents are being prepared.

Recommended Resolution:

That the CAO / Secretary-Treasurer Report be approved for information purposes.

The report aligns with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

1. Strengthen and Increase Collaboration with Community Stakeholders

Respectfully Submitted

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO / Secretary Treasurer

10.3) Water Management

10.3.1) Flood Forecasting and Operations

Flood Messaging and Flood Events

There have been no flood messages issued since the last written report to the Board of Directors. There were neither the rainfall conditions to produce watershed flooding, nor the wind conditions to produce shoreline flooding. The later half of August through September saw less than normal rainfall. Winds, as reported at Cedar Springs, were also calm through August and September. Only 2 events saw winds exceed 30 km/h, one which lasted 1 hour and one which lasted 3 hours. Neither event had winds in excess of 35 km/h.

Report on Lake Conditions

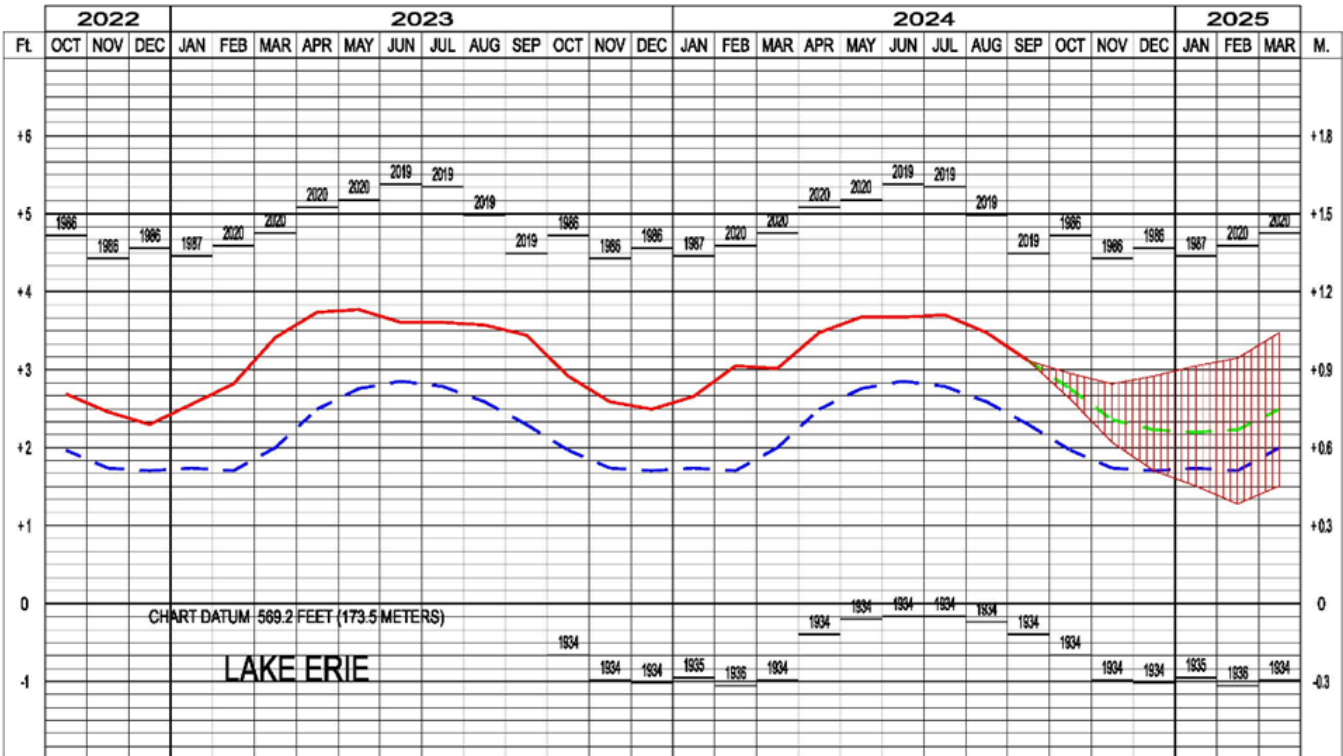
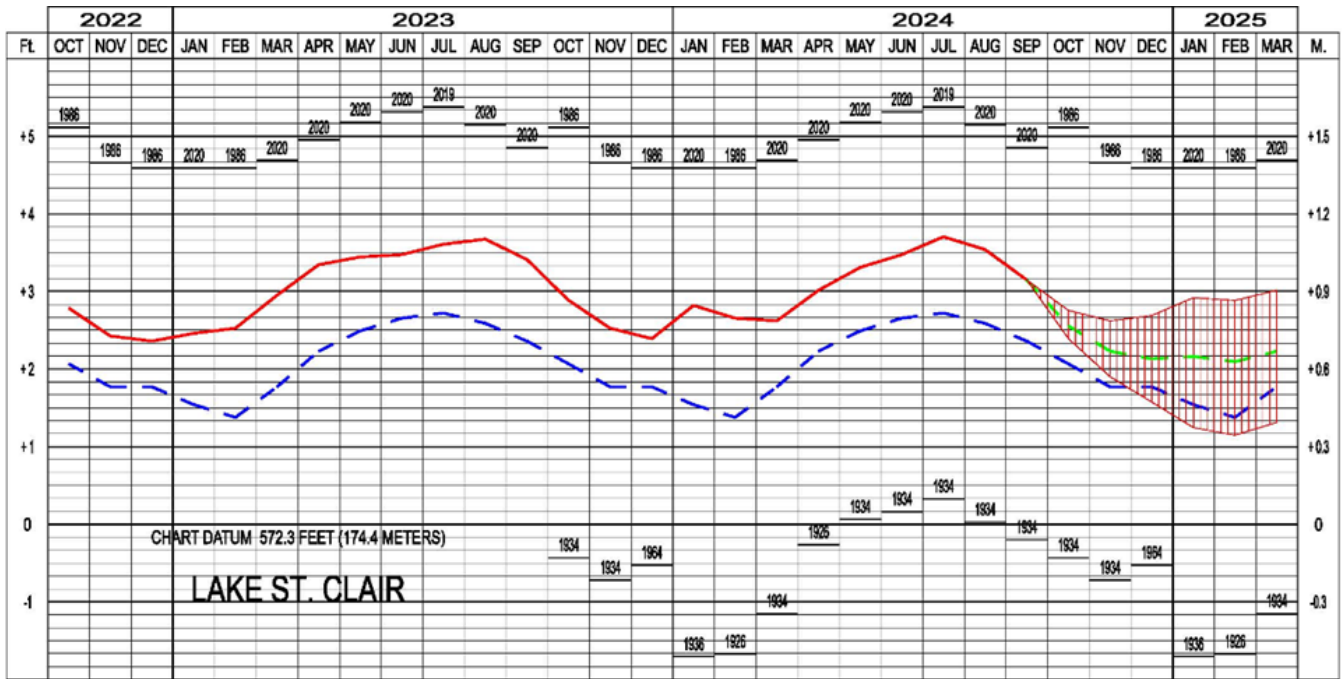
Average daily lake levels on Lake Erie at the beginning of October were around 174.40 m (I.G.L.D.). The all-time record high monthly average for October was 174.94 m, set in 1986. Water levels at the beginning of October were still 30 cm above what would be considered normal for the month of October. However, current water levels are still quite close to where they were this time last year and in 2022. Water levels now appear to be in their seasonal decline. Water levels are predicted to drop around 13 cm by the beginning of November.

Average daily water levels on Lake St. Clair at the beginning of October were around 175.34 m (I.G.L.D.). The all-time record high monthly average for October was 175.96, set in 1986. Water levels at the beginning of October were 31 cm above what would be considered normal for the month of October. However, current water levels are still quite close to where they were this time last year and in 2022. Water levels now appear to be in their seasonal decline. Water levels are predicted to drop around 18 cm by the beginning of November.

Stronger wind events (most likely gale force wind events lasting several hours in duration) are now required to cause minor flooding along the LTVCA's Lake St. Clair shoreline and along most of its Lake Erie shoreline. However, the damage caused by high lake levels over the last few years along Erie Shore Drive means it's likely still more vulnerable at lower wind speeds.

The figures below are published by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and graph the monthly average water levels and water level forecast over the next 6 months. These versions were published at the beginning of October.





10.3.2) Flood Control Structures

The Thames River has seen below average rainfall over the last couple of months. As a result, the LTVCA's flood control structures have not needed to be operated since the last report to the Board of Directors.

Regular seasonal maintenance continues on the flood control structures. Most noticeable to the public is that mowing had been delayed earlier in the season, due to wet weather, equipment and staffing issues. Staff are now catching up on this work.

Inspection and maintenance work has begun on the last two pumps at the 6th St. Backwater Dam and Pumping Station. Last year, the first of the three pumps was pulled, inspected and had its seals replaced. The second pump has now been pulled, inspected, the seals replaced, and it has been reinstalled. The third pump has also been pulled, and as of the writing of this report, is currently at Schepens Ltd in Wallaceburg for the inspection and maintenance. Additional work is also being performed by Clarke Construction to remove excess sediment accumulated in the pump chamber. The sediment removal is expected to be completed before this Board of Director’s meeting. The reinstallation of the third pump has not yet been scheduled as the maintenance is not yet completed.

Photos: Pumps being reinstalled, and removed for servicing, October 1st, 2024



10.3.3) Low Water Response Program

The Low Water Response Program looks at both precipitation and flow in local watercourses in determining whether there is a low water condition. For precipitation, both 18-month and 3-month rainfall totals are examined, and the program thresholds are: Level 1, 80% of average; Level 2, 60% of average; and Level 3, 40% of average. For flows, the average flow over the last month is examined and the summer thresholds are: Level 1, 70% lowest average summer flow (LASF); Level 2, 50% LASF; and Level 3, 30% LASF. During the growing season, LTVCA staff create a brief report summarizing conditions around the watershed, which is available by request.

Looking at the rainfall over the last three months, July and August saw wetter than normal conditions. In August most of the rain fell at the beginning of the month. Then, September was drier than usual, with many gauges recording less than half of the normal rainfall for the month. When examined over the 3-month period, most gauges recorded near normal rainfall. The 18-month rainfall totals showed slightly below average rainfall.

With respect to flow in the region's watercourses, September began with water levels in the lower Thames watershed slightly above the LASF. Within a few days, flows dropped below the LASF. However, some light rains during the first week, and later around the third weekend of the month, gave water levels another little boost. Looking at the average over the entire month, water levels on the Thames River were slightly below the LASF and but still above the program threshold for a Low Water Level 1 Condition. Looking at median flows for McGregor Creek, the September monthly median value was around twice the lowest summer monthly median value, suggesting that water levels were not abnormally low.

Based on these rainfall indicators there does not appear to be a need to declare any kind of Low Water Condition.

Further information on the Provincial Low Water Response Program can be found at <https://www.lioapplications.lrc.gov.on.ca/webapps/swmc/low-water-response/>

10.3.4) Watershed Monitoring

Watershed-wide surface water quality monitoring continues at 22 sites throughout the watershed. Since it is PWQMN program season, analysis for 8 of these sites per month is being covered by the PWQMN program. The remainder is being covered by the recently signed agreement with MECP funded through the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA).

The LTVCA has entered into an agreement with Health Canada to regularly sample for pesticides at four locations in the watershed. Samples are being collected at Big Creek, McGregor Creek, Jeanettes Creek, and the Thames River at Thamesville. Eighty-one pesticide samples have been collected since June and have been sent on for analysis.

Several additional sampling runs have also been undertaken with an algae sensor to see whether there were any concerns yet regarding blue-green algae blooms. The results of that sampling are discussed below under the Harmful Algal Blooms section.

10.3.5) Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB)

Lake Erie Blooms

During the bloom season, the operational NOAA Lake Erie HAB Forecast provides the current extent and 5-day outlooks of where the bloom will travel and what concentrations are likely to be seen, allowing managers to determine whether to take preventative actions. At the time this agenda was drafted, the most recent Forecast was from October 6th (see forecast below).

During the first half of September, a bloom was detected along the Canadian shoreline in the central basin, along the eastern side of Point Pelee through almost to Dealtown. This was somewhat unusual, as typically there is a bloom in the western basin along the Canadian shoreline before one develops in the central basin. The Forecast from September 15th is included to show the bloom location (see below). Operators at Chatham-Kent's Wheatley and South Chatham-Kent Drinking Water Plants detected low levels of microcystins in the lake water (raw water) on September 9th. Using standard procedures, the operators were easily able to handle the situation. Follow up sampling on the 16th again showed detectable amounts at Wheatley in the raw water. By September 18th, microcystin was no longer detected in the raw water by either plant.

Currently, the cyanobacteria bloom seems to be limited to Sandusky Bay and a narrow band along the far western shoreline of the lake. Imagery suggests there might be small pockets of cyanobacteria in Rondeau Bay, at the mouth of the Thames, and along the eastern shore of Lake St. Clair. The Forecast describes the "scum risk" as very low. It would seem the bloom season is coming to an end.

Thames River Blooms

The Thames River and its tributaries can also be subject to algal blooms. Monitoring for potential algae blooms is conducted by LTVCA staff with an algae sensor, when the potential for a bloom seems to exist. Earlier this year there was one occasion when there seemed that bloom was about to form. However, shortly after a significant rainfall event raised water levels on the river and flushed it out. Since the last report to the Board of Directors, there have been two additional, short duration, blooms that appeared on the Thames River.

On August 28th, LTVCA staff began to suspect that a bloom was forming on the Thames River. On the 29th, Randy Kirby, Watershed Monitoring Specialist, observed the bloom from around Thamesville to Bloomfield Road. Monitoring with an algae sensor seemed to indicate the highest concentration in downtown Chatham around the 5th St. Bridge, but concentrations were still elevated all the way down to Jacob Road even though the bloom was not visually detectable that far downstream. MECP, ECCC and University of Windsor staff were notified that day of the bloom. Delaware Nation was notified on the 30th. There also appeared to be an isolated bloom on Big Creek where it crossed Essex County Road 42. By September 4th, it appeared that the bloom had largely cleared up. However, there was some residual brown algae that could still be seen.

On September 23rd, the river started to look a bit green again and a bloom was again noticeable on the 24th. LTVCA staff did not mobilize immediately as weather forecasts were suggesting 30 to 45 mm of rain which would easily have flushed the bloom away. However, the rain did not appear, and Randy Kirby went out on the 25th to monitor the bloom. This time the bloom seemed to be just in the city of Chatham, from Communication Road through to Keil Drive. Samples collected from this bloom did not show detectable amounts of microcystins. This bloom cleared up fairly quickly and was no longer visually detectable by the end of the day on the 27th. Another isolated bloom was observed around the Deary Pump Station off Jeanettes Creek. Samples collected from this bloom showed microcystin concentrations 2.5 times above the detectable limit.



Left: Big Creek @ Essex County Road 42, August 30th, 2024.



Right: Thames River, from 5th St. Bridge, facing upstream, August 30th, 2024.



Left: Deary Pump Station, September 25th, 2024.



Right: Thames River, from 5th St. Bridge, facing upstream, September 25th, 2024.

The reports align with the following objectives of the LTVCA's Strategic Plan:

2. Strengthen and Increase Collaboration with Community Stakeholders
3. Increase the Awareness of the Value of Good Watershed Stewardship
4. Improve Capital Asset Review

Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom Forecast

2024-09-15

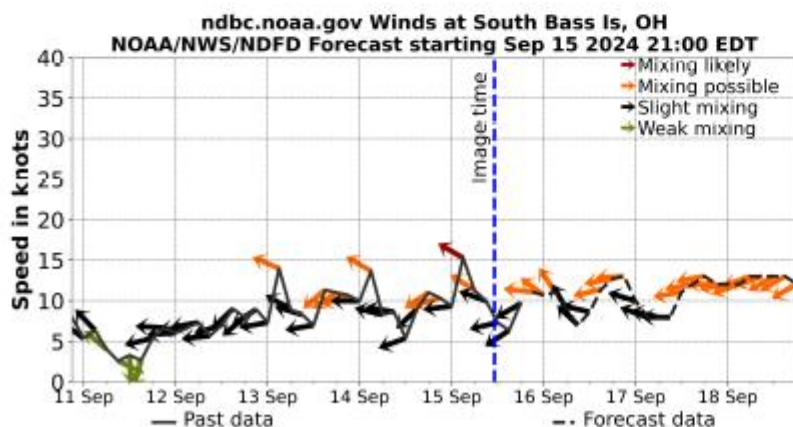
Summary

The cyanobacteria bloom in western Lake Erie has an approximate area of 420 square miles, which is an increase in area since Sep 13. The *Microcystis* bloom extends from Stony Point, MI to Catawba Island, OH. Low concentrations of cyanobacteria are also observed from Catawba Island, OH towards Lorain, OH. Sandusky Bay has a local bloom of mixed cyanobacteria. Toxins have been detected above the recreational limit. They can be highly concentrated in scums! If you see scum, keep your pets and yourself out of the water. In the satellite imagery or bloom forecast position products, any areas that are orange or red are likely to have scum, especially during calm winds, see Mixing Forecast product. –NCCOS HAB Forecasting Team 09 September 2024.

The past few days of imagery can be seen at [the HAB monitoring site](#). The Lake Erie Forecast is operated by the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science. Contact hab@noaa.gov for technical Questions. Last Updated: 2024-09-15 09 PM EST

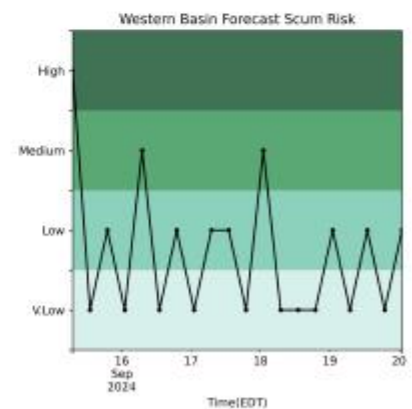


Current Lake Erie Sentinel-3 satellite imagery from the Ocean and Land Color Imager (OLCI) on Sep 15, 2024, showing bloom location and extent in the western basin. Grey indicates clouds or missing data. The estimated threshold of cyanobacteria detection is 20,000 cells/mL. Inset shows a truecolor image of the entire lake. Data derived from Copernicus Sentinel-3.



Wind speed and direction from SouthBassIs, OH. Blooms mix through water column at wind speeds > 15 knots.

For more information visit: coastalscience.noaa.gov/science-areas/habs/hab-forecasts/lake-erie/



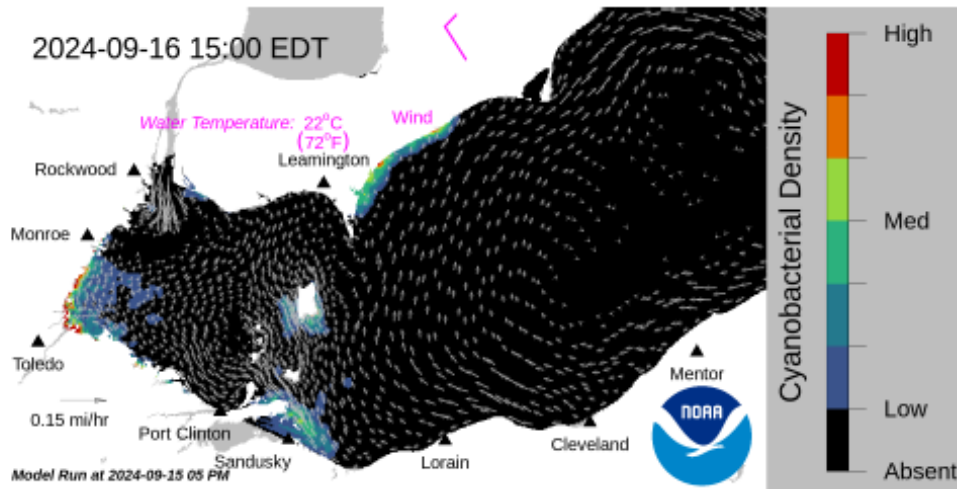
Where the bloom is present in western Lake Erie, the potential risk of scum.

1305 East West Hwy, Rm 8110
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
coastalscience.noaa.gov

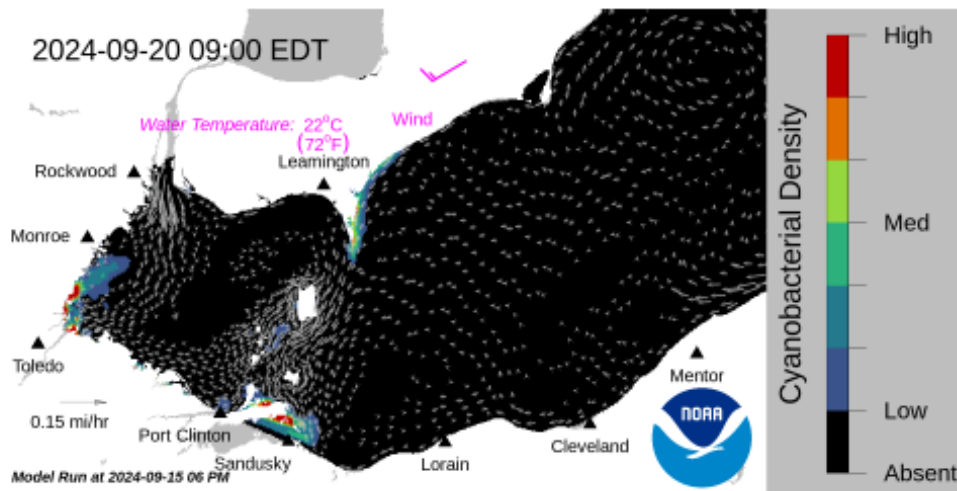
[f](#) [x](#) [in](#) [noaa.coastalsci](#) | [noaa.coastalsci](#)

Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom Forecast

2024-09-15



Forecast surface bloom position for Sep 16, modeled from the last satellite image with water currents estimated from the Lake Erie Operational Forecast System (LEOFS). Potential for bloom movement is forecast in 3-dimensions with a hydrodynamic model using satellite imagery and currents. The modeled output does not contain clouds. Black indicates the absence of chlorophyll and gray indicates area with no data. The arrows show forecasted currents. Water temperature and winds (in magenta) are the averages for the western basin from the model.



Forecast surface bloom position for Sep 20. Black indicates the absence of chlorophyll and gray indicates area with no data. The arrows show forecasted currents. Water temperature and winds (in magenta) are the averages for the western basin from the model.

Additional resources:

- [Archived Lake Erie Forecasts](#)
- [More information about our bloom monitoring imagery](#)
- [FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions about cyanobacteria and the forecasts NOAA issues](#)
- [Contributors and Data Providers](#)
- [Lake Erie HAB Forecast Guide - User guide to help navigate the forecast products](#)
- [Lake Erie Hypoxia Forecast](#)

For more information visit: coastalscience.noaa.gov/science-areas/habs/hab-forecasts/lake-erie/



Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom Forecast

2024-10-06

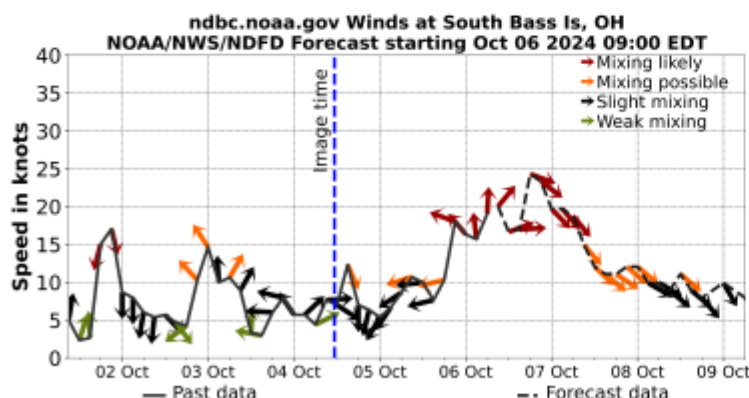
Summary

The cyanobacteria bloom in western Lake Erie has an approximate area of 30 square miles, which is a decrease in area since Oct 03. The *Microcystis* bloom is present in western Lake Erie, but at reduced concentrations as compared to mid-September, likely due to wind-driven water column mixing and sediment resuspension. As of October 2nd, the bloom extended from Monroe, MI to Cedar Point National Wildlife Refuge, OH. Sandusky Bay continues to have a local bloom of mixed cyanobacteria. Toxins have been detected below the recreational limit. They can be highly concentrated in scums! If you see scum, keep your pets and yourself out of the water. In the satellite imagery or bloom forecast position products, any areas that are orange or red are likely to have scum, especially during calm winds, see Mixing Forecast product. --NCCOS HAB Forecasting Team 3 October 2024.

The past few days of imagery can be seen at [the HAB monitoring site](#). The Lake Erie Forecast is operated by the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science. Contact hab@noaa.gov for technical Questions. Last Updated: 2024-10-06 09 AM EST

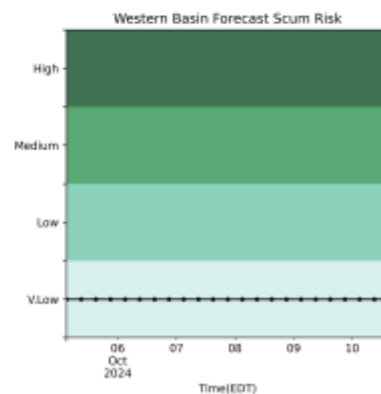


Current Lake Erie Sentinel-3 satellite imagery from the Ocean and Land Color Imager (OLCI) on Oct 04, 2024, showing bloom location and extent in the western basin. Grey indicates clouds or missing data. The estimated threshold of cyanobacteria detection is 20,000 cells/mL. Inset shows a truecolor image of the entire lake. Data derived from Copernicus Sentinel-3.



Wind speed and direction from SouthBassIs, OH. Blooms mix through water column at wind speeds > 15 knots.

For more information visit: coastalscience.noaa.gov/science-areas/habs/hab-forecasts/lake-erie/



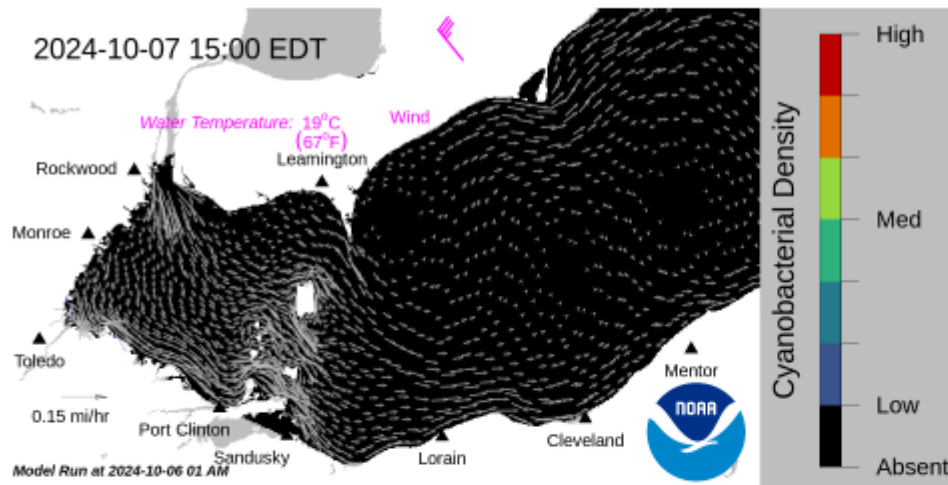
Where the bloom is present in western Lake Erie, the potential risk of scum.

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Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
coastalscience.noaa.gov

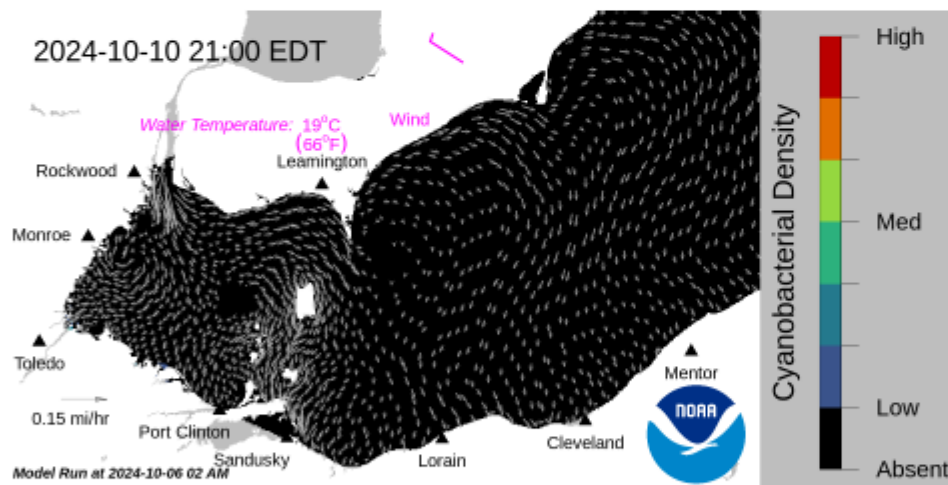
[f](#) [x](#) [in](#) [noaa.coastalsci](#) | [noaa.coastal.sci](#)

Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom Forecast

2024-10-06



Forecast surface bloom position for Oct 07, modeled from the last satellite image with water currents estimated from the Lake Erie Operational Forecast System (LEOFS). Potential for bloom movement is forecast in 3-dimensions with a hydrodynamic model using satellite imagery and currents. The modeled output does not contain clouds. Black indicates the absence of chlorophyll and gray indicates area with no data. The arrows show forecasted currents. Water temperature and winds (in magenta) are the averages for the western basin from the model.



Forecast surface bloom position for Oct 10. Black indicates the absence of chlorophyll and gray indicates area with no data. The arrows show forecasted currents. Water temperature and winds (in magenta) are the averages for the western basin from the model.

Additional resources:

- [Archived Lake Erie Forecasts](#)
- [More information about our bloom monitoring imagery](#)
- [FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions about cyanobacteria and the forecasts NOAA issues](#)
- [Contributors and Data Providers](#)
- [Lake Erie HAB Forecast Guide - User guide to help navigate the forecast products](#)
- [Lake Erie Hypoxia Forecast](#)

For more information visit: coastalscience.noaa.gov/science-areas/habs/hab-forecasts/lake-erie/



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10.4) Planning and Regulations

10.4.1) Planning

From the end of July 2024 through to the end of September 2024, there were 48 planning submissions reviewed by staff for this reporting season with respect to the Provincial Policy Statement, Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 41/24. On average it takes roughly 5 days to respond to submissions, ranging from same day response to 15 days for more involved planning submissions. There have also been 58 phone calls and over 147 email responses to inquiries that staff have responded to.

Planning Numbers	2023 Totals	Jan Totals	Feb Totals	Mar Totals	Apr Totals	May Totals	June Totals	July Totals	Aug Totals	Sept Totals	2024 Totals
Chatham-Kent	270	14	16	15	23	39	11	20	5	17	160
Elgin	89	7	2	2	2	0	0	3	6	4	26
Essex	17	3	0	0	5	0	0	3	12	0	23
Middlesex	35	6	1	1	0	1	5	1	0	4	19
Total Numbers	411	30	19	18	30	40	16	27	23	25	228

10.4.2) Planning Fees

MUNICIPALITY	AUG 2024 – SEPT 2024	2024 TOTAL	2023 TOTAL
Chatham-Kent	\$900.00	\$2,650.00	
Elgin County			
Southwold	\$315.00	\$1,015.00	\$930.00
Dutton Dunwich		\$0	\$230.00
West Elgin		\$400.00	\$7,595.00
Essex County			
Lakeshore	\$250.00	\$1,150.00	\$1,115.00
Middlesex County			
Middlesex Centre		\$0	
YTD Total	\$1,465.00	\$5,215.00	\$8,755.00

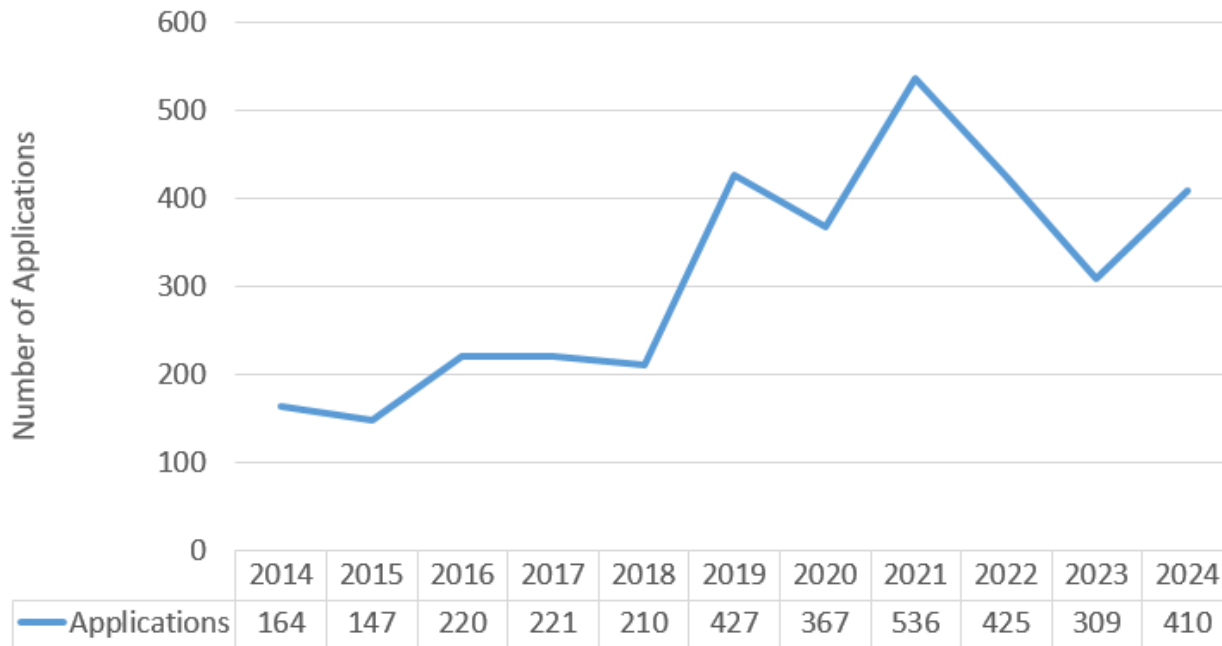
10.4.3) Section 28 Regulations / Permitting

With respect to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 41/24, the LTVCA received a total of 240 new permit applications in the months of August and September. In the recent past, 240 applications would have been a record for the entirety of a calendar year. The majority of the permit applications are related to the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (“SWIFT”) program – bringing government subsidized high speed internet to rural areas. The projects are large in scope and cover significant portions of our watershed.

Of the 240 new applications and, combined with previously submitted “incomplete” applications, a total of 79 applications were deemed to be “complete” and could be reviewed. Those 79 applications were in addition to the previous queue of 43 “complete” applications leading into this reporting period. 93 of those 122 “complete” applications were processed and all were approved by staff with conditions. As of the end of September, 29 “complete” applications were in the queue for processing. 167 of the “incomplete” applications were just awaiting their application fee to be paid prior to joining the queue for processing.

Between the beginning of the year and up to the end of September, the LTVCA had received a total of 410 “complete” applications. Comparatively, the number of complete permit applications received by the end of September in previous years is tracked below:

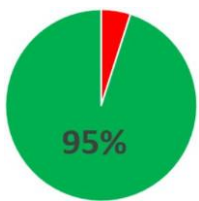
**Number of Complete Applications Received
by the End of September**



\$99,100 in permit application fees had been collected, or was to be collected, as of the end of September which is up \$36,350 from the last board report.

10.4.4) Application Timelines:

Review for Completeness:



Under the new regulation (O. Reg. 41/24), the LTVCA is required to determine whether or not an application is considered to be “complete” or “incomplete” and provide a response of such to the applicant within 21 calendar days. For the months of August and September, the average response time with respect to this was 11 days (ranging between 0 and 73 days). 95% of all applications met the required timeline for a “completeness” response.

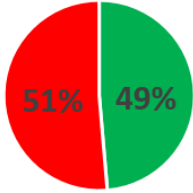
Permit Processing:

For applications issued in August and September, the table and charts below indicate that 100% of “routine” and 51% of “minor” permit applications met their applicable customer service standard for turnaround time.

Complexity of Application	# of Days to Review Permit Applications				
	0 - 14 Days	15 - 21 Days	21 - 28 Days	29 - 90 Days	> 90 Days
Routine	19	0	0	0	0
Minor	21	15	2	29	7
Major	0	0	0	0	0



For the months of August and September, the average turnaround time for a routine permit application was 2 days (ranged between 0 and 10 days). The customer service standard for routine permits is a turnaround within 14 days. The processing time for routine permit applications is meeting the customer service target.



For the months of August and September, the average turnaround time for a minor permit application was 40 days (ranged between 0 and 92 days). For private property minor complexity permits, the average turnaround time was 17 days (ranged between 0 and 46 days). The customer service standard for minor complexity permits is a turnaround within 21 days. The processing time for minor permit applications is generally not meeting the customer service target as there has been a large influx of applications from a single utility company working on a very large fibre optic project

in our watershed. Staff have been coordinating with the company to meet their scheduling priorities while also attempting to prioritize 'regular' minor applications from private property owners. The processing time for private property minor complexity permits is generally meeting the customer service standard.

One "major" permit application was received in this time period and a decision that a hearing was required for the application was provided to the applicant within the applicable customer service standard. However, the hearing has yet to be scheduled.

10.4.5) Property Inquiries:

Up to the end of September, 974 property inquiries (including permit pre-consultation questions) were received and responded to by the Regulations Technician which is 256 more since the last board report. The August and September inquiries were responded to with ~610 e-mails and ~10 phone calls.

At the time of writing of this staff report, the current response time to property and pre-consultation inquiries is up to 10 business days for both e-mails and phone calls. While the response time has improved since the last board report, the majority of August and September saw response times of up to 20 business days.

10.4.6) Regulation Mapping Update:

The LTVCA is currently without a GIS Technician. The regulation mapping update project has been put on hold.

10.4.7) Policies Update:

Given the current workload, there has been no work completed on the Policy Manual and therefore no additional municipal or public consultations on the Manual. The Manual hasn't been updated since the original draft from the March board meeting. The Manual still requires multiple new sections and revisions to meet the requirements of Section 12 of Ontario Regulation 41/24.

10.4.8) Section 28 Enforcement:

In the first nine months of 2024, 21 complaints / tips were received from the public about possible enforcement issues which is three more than the last board report. 14 of the 21 issues are confirmed violations or potential violations of the Conservation Authorities Act and the regulation. Four of the violations have been resolved.

10.4.9) O. Reg. 41/24 Permit Applications

O.Reg. 41/24 Permit Applications
(Applications Processed in August and September 2024)

B.D. 10/17/2024

App No.	Location	Community / Township	Municipality	Decision	Processing Time (days)
158-2024	6507 Riverview Line	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 21, 2024	2
246-2024	Heron Line adjacent to 7th Concession Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
247-2024	Belle Rose Line adjacent to Gowrie Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
248-2024	Rivard Drain at 7542 Maple Line	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
249-2024	Maple Line adjacent to Rivard Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
250-2024	Rivard Drain at 7926 Maple Line	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
251-2024	Big Pointe Road between 25302 and 25362	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
252-2024	Heron Line adjacent to 7th Concession Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	86
253-2024	Town Line Road adjacent to McFarlane Relief Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
254-2024	Town Line Road adjacent to Duphette Pump Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
255-2024	Town Line Road at Stephenson Pump Works	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
256-2024	Bradley Line at Dolson Creek Mechanical Works Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
257-2024	Bradley Line adjacent to McFarlane Relief Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
258-2024	Bradley Line adjacent to Myers Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
259-2024	Bradley Line adjacent to Bradley Pumping Works	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	92
262-2024	St. Philippes Line adjacent to Myers Relief Drain East Branch	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
263-2024	St. Philippes Line adjacent to Myers Relief Drain West Branch	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78

(Applications Processed in August and September 2024)

App No.	Location	Community / Township	Municipality	Decision	Processing Time (days)
264-2024	St. Philippes Line adjacent to Myers Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
265-2024	St. Philippes Line adjacent to Big Pointe Club Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
266-2024	Myers Relief Drain West Branch at 6720 St. Philippes Line	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
267-2024	Big Pointe Road at Myers Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
268-2024	Jacob Road at Myers Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
269-2024	Drain near 6269 St. Philippes Line	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
270-2024	Big Pointe Road at Toulouse Pumping Works	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
271-2024	Big Pointe Road between Toulouse Pumping Works and 25770	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
272-2024	Jacob Road between Mallard Line and Toulouse Pumping Works	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 29, 2024	78
278-2024	900 Baptiste Road	Tilbury West	Lakeshore	Granted: Sept 24, 2024	32
301-2024	Switzer Drive at #4815	Ekfrid	Southwest Middlesex	Granted: Aug 09, 2024	15
302-2024	Pratt Siding Road at Government Drain No.6	Mosa	Southwest Middlesex	Granted: Aug 09, 2024	15
303-2024	Dundonald Road near #21540 and #21465	Mosa	Southwest Middlesex	Granted: Aug 09, 2024	15
304-2024	5279 Tecumseh Line	Tilbury East	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 21, 2024	0
305-2024	McCallum Drain	Ekfrid	Southwest Middlesex	Granted: Aug 09, 2024	35
308-2024	South Rodney Drain	Aldborough	West Elgin	Granted: Aug 09, 2024	31
309-2024	Fleuren Drain	Aldborough	West Elgin	Granted: Aug 13, 2024	35
310-2024	12825 Iona Road	Dunwich	Dutton Dunwich	Granted: Sept 16, 2024	21
316-2024	13265 Routh Road	Southwold	Southwold	Granted: Sept 16, 2024	18
318-2024	Lee's Creek at 18386 Lagonda Crescent	Rondeau Bay Estates	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 09, 2024	46
320-2024	19072 Lakeside Drive	Lighthouse Cove	Lakeshore	Granted: Aug 13, 2024	15
326-2024	Hartwick Drain Branch No.2	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 08, 2024	15
327-2024	Johnston Branch Drain	Zone	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 13, 2024	20

(Applications Processed in August and September 2024)

App No.	Location	Community / Township	Municipality	Decision	Processing Time (days)
328-2024	Hartwick Drain	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 13, 2024	19
330-2024	Addeman Drain	Howard	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 19, 2024	25
331-2024	22677 Victoria Road	Howard	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 09, 2024	42
332-2024	Laurentia Drain	Tilbury East	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 22, 2024	28
333-2024	Hebblethwaite Drain	Howard	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	29
334-2024	East Branch of the Scafe Drain	Howard	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	29
335-2024	Mills Drain	Dover	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 08, 2024	13
346-2024	18448 Raglan Road	Shrewsbury	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 09, 2024	39
347-2024	3 Cornerstone Place	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	16
348-2024	7 Cornerstone Place	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 23, 2024	16
349-2024	177 Howard Road	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 12, 2024	4
350-2024	511 Indian Creek Road West	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 12, 2024	10
351-2024	23 McIntosh Avenue	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 23, 2024	42
352-2024	19165 Bluewater Avenue	Lighthouse Cove	Lakeshore	Granted: Sept 09, 2024	17
354-2024	294 Detroit Line	Wheatley	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 24, 2024	33
355-2024	Knoll Road at Culnan Drain Branch	Orford	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
356-2024	Selton Line at Duffus Drain	Orford	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
357-2024	Selton Line at Ashton Drain	Orford	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
358-2024	Little John Road at McCoughrin Drain	Orford	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
359-2024	Knoll Road at Duffus Drain	Orford	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
361-2024	Evergreen Line at Cryderman Drain	Camden	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
362-2024	Evergreen Line at Lee Smith Drain	Camden	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
363-2024	Evergreen Line at Carson Drain	Camden	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
364-2024	Smoke Line at Mason Drain	Camden	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 10, 2024	12
365-2024	150 Ironwood Trail	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 27, 2024	5
366-2024	146 Ironwood Trail	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 27, 2024	5
367-2024	Morris Road at Tremblay Creek Drain	Tilbury West	Lakeshore	Granted: Aug 21, 2024	0
368-2024	Lakeshore Road 303 at Big Creek Drain	Tilbury West	Lakeshore	Granted: Aug 21, 2024	0
369-2024	116 Fenceline Drive	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 03, 2024	10
370-2024	22804 Victoria Road	Howard	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Aug 28, 2024	1
371-2024	0 Creekside Road	Tilbury West	Lakeshore	Granted: Sept 17, 2024	14

O.Reg. 41/24 Permit Applications

B.D. 10/17/2024

(Applications Processed in August and September 2024)

App No.	Location	Community / Township	Municipality	Decision	Processing Time (days)
372-2024	0 Essex Kent Road	Tilbury West	Lakeshore	Granted: Aug 30, 2024	1
373-2024	2825 Essex Kent Road	Tilbury West	Lakeshore	Granted: Aug 30, 2024	1
385-2024	42 Rosewood Crescent	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 04, 2024	0
387-2024	256 Ironwood Trail	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 23, 2024	19
388-2024	260 Ironwood Trail	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 23, 2024	19
389-2024	15263 Hastings Line	Orford	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 04, 2024	0
390-2024	56 Creek Road	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 13, 2024	0
421-2024	22460 Creek Road	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 30, 2024	21
423-2024	Arnold Creek at Prince Albert Road	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 12, 2024	1
424-2024	20963 Woodland Road	Wheatley	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 11, 2024	2
457-2024	1030 Kerr Avenue	Erieau	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 12, 2024	0
458-2024	19 Daleview Crescent	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 16, 2024	1
462-2024	18685 Erie Shore Drive	Erie Shore Drive	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 24, 2024	1
463-2024	Mills Drain - ID#WC_17	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
464-2024	Pain Court Creek Drain - ID#WCE_02	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
465-2024	Holmes Drain - ID#WC_05	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
466-2024	Holmes Drain - ID#WCE_06	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
467-2024	Haviland Drain - ID#WCE_07	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
468-2024	Arnold Creek Drain - ID#WCE_03	Chatham	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
469-2024	Ferguson Drain - ID#WCE_04	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
470-2024	Wolfe Creek Drain - ID#WC_18	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
471-2024	Downie Drain - ID#WCE_05	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	1
488-2024	10653 River Line	Harwich	Chatham-Kent	Granted: Sept 20, 2024	0

10.5) Conservation Lands

10.5.1) Conservation Areas

Longwoods Road Conservation Area

As we come to a close on our Phase 1 construction we are within our Holdback period and final documentation for occupancy. In the next coming weeks this project phase should be completed. We will then gear up and begin Phase 2A which will consist of the Elevator addition, the new gallery within the middle theater and the upgrade to the washroom facilities on the lower floor.



The Hall with light fixtures.

Mosa Forest

A parking lot has been added to allow for usage of the trails and viewing of our interpretive signage that was installed this winter. A boot brush will be added at the entrance to help us to keep our CA's clear from invasive species that may get tracked in on the bottom of boots and shoes. With these changes we hope to help reduce ATV activity and increase pedestrian foot traffic. These efforts are thanks to our Land Staff, Stewardship Staff and our SAR Staff. CFIA has given us wonderful news that no Japanese Stilt-grass has been found within MOSA Forest at this point as we have been working on eradicating it over the past couple years under the guidance provided by the CFIA.



Mosa Forest: Before and After Parking Lot Installation.

6th Street Dam

In 2023 and 2024 the pumps for the 6th Street Dam have been pulled for preventative maintenance. In doing so the dam needs to be sand bagged and set up to help reduce the flow of water that enters the dam so that the pumps can be pulled and the reservoir vac-trucked out so ensure a clean entry and reduction in sediment. Below are photos of the staff placing storm bags along the lip of the grate to reduce the water inflow.



6th St. Dam - Masen Kankula and Randy Kirby placing Storm Bags along the Dam grate

Camping

Camping season coming to an end and slowing down for the season, E.M Warwick, Big Bend and C.M Wilson are moving through the season as predicted. The inclement weather of heavy rainfalls and storm frequency is keeping the Lands Staff on their toes as they are always striving to keep the campgrounds clean and functional. We had a wonderful set of rangers working with us this year; Erica, Dorothy, Sarah and Briahna refreshed CM Wilson and got creative with the campers this season.

Rental Houses

Two of the rental houses have long standing residents. Livermore has a small family living in the residence and they seem to be enjoying the property; taking pride in its presentation which is greatly appreciated by LTVCA Staff.

Administration Office

The administration office was featured in a Chatham Voice article titled “Natural ‘garden’ on display on Thames Street”. The importance of this article allowed staff to discuss with the press the importance of the design of the Offices BioSwale and Naturalize Garden. The perception of the building can confuse the general public with what is really going on with the infrastructure as many residents do not realise that there is an underground system to help collect and filter water to reduce run-off loads to the sewer systems. The article allowed staff to highlight the importance of the infrastructure, the plant diversity and the importance to the ecology and habitat that we have created in the middle of a city to play a key role in conservation that can be seen as a demonstration.

The office has struggled with residents inhabiting the back deck over the years. These residents cause damage to the deck itself, the picnic tables and often leave personal items behind which can cause health and safety concerns. To help preserve the deck from damage and unwanted used, the Land staff have built a gate to help mitigate previous ongoing issues.



Main Office, back deck gate

Team Building & Events

The Land and Stewardship Staff are constantly working together to get projects done and when they work together it lends itself to team building and diversifying roles throughout the LTVCA Staffing compliment. Land staff have been partnered up with our Watershed Staff to work together to complete Bathymetry work to create modeling of the Thames River. Our Land Staff and Watershed Staff regularly work together on Dam operations but again have partnered together to work towards the maintenance of the 6th St Dam as we work on the maintenance of the pumps and clearing the structure of sediment.

The Land, Stewardship and ALUS Staff have worked closely together to help with many events recently, from the annual Cultivating Conservation Tour, annual Chatham-Kent Lambton Water Festival to the North West Regional Cross Country Finals, staff have been all over the Watershed to ensure the Conservation Areas and various departments are supported.



Randy Kirby- Bathymetry on the Thames, Adam Gibb at Cultivating Conservation



Water Festival, Sensational Snakes and the Lather Up Booths

The reports align with the following objectives of the **LTVCA's Strategic Plan**:

2. Strengthen and Increase Collaboration with Community Stakeholders
3. Increase the Awareness of the Value of Good Watershed Stewardship

10.6) Conservation Services

10.6.1) General Update

Program promotion and lining projects up for next spring is in full swing. Our radio campaign kicked off with information to the agricultural sector on programming we are embarking on through Environment and Climate Change Canada. Positions are currently being advertised to assemble a team to take on this watershed wide initiative. Recruits are also needed for the ALUS Elgin program lead full time, as well as ALUS Middlesex lead for maternity leave.

The 4th Annual Cultivating Conservation Tour was also held in September showcasing ALUS Chatham-Kent and their 5th Anniversary. Somerville stock viewing day was attended. Updates from the nursery on stock availability were less than encouraging. Sourcing quality seed for 2 and 3 year product remains a challenge. LTVCA has increased its efforts to collect seed to assist in supporting our reforestation program. This fall, white oak, red oak, tamarack, tulip, spruce cones, and some hickory were shipped to Somerville seedlings. Forests Ontario is now permitting up to 12 species per project and announced an option for 1, 2, 3, gallon stock as well.



Somerville Stock Viewing Day 2024 – Red Oak seedlings in the foreground; acorn planting behind tractor



Spruce Cone cut test before collection

Several events in Urban Stewardship have been held. Staff have attended local events to spread the word of our programming as well.

Eastern District: Our Eastern District Stewardship Technician, Tyler Thornton is frequently communicating and following up with local landowners who consistently reach out and are inquiring about future projects to be conducted on their properties. A large stock tree planting event was held in liaison with Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, Trees Canada, The Municipality of Southwold and volunteers, which took place on September 9, 2024. A total of 120 trees were planted in two different public parks that are in the new subdivision, which is being constructed in Talbotville. Tyler attended the Rodney Fair to promote LTVCA stewardship programs on September 14. All wetland projects within regulated areas, which require a permit have been submitted to the regulations department for approval, and wetland projects are well on their way to be established throughout the fall of 2024. Additionally, funding for some of these wetland projects were requested from the Elgin Clean Water Program during the meeting at the Kettle Creek Conservation Area.

Viable Red Oak, White Oak, and Tulip Tree Seed has been collected and shipped to the Somerville nursery for future tree planting projects. A one-acre planting of native wildflowers was completed to establish native grassland habitat within the eastern district of the watershed. Another application for the WHC Habitat Conservation Stamp Initiative 2025-2026 has been submitted for further wetland funding.

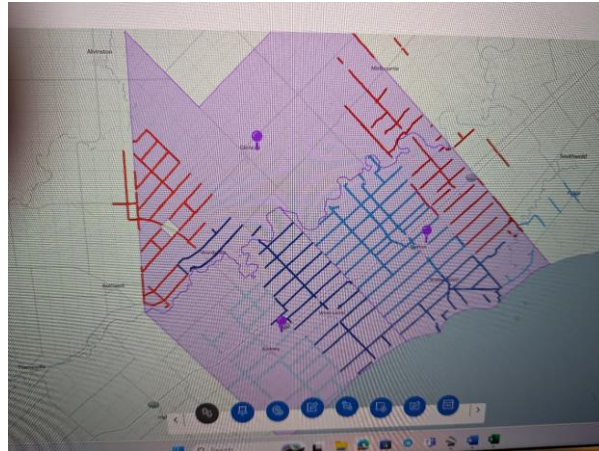
Conservation Services staff will be participating as volunteers for the Chatham Kent Lambton Water Festival and will be hosting various events. Two Conservation Services staff are part of the health and safety committee and are involved in performing safety inspections for several conservation lands. Eastern District Stewardship Technician Tyler Thornton is expecting a child in mid October and will be taking some time off.



Rodney Fair Event



Southwold Municipality Large Stock Tree Planting Event



Canada Post Rural Route Mailing List for Stewardship Programs Advertisement

Wetlands and Ducks Unlimited Canada Partnership

As soon as the conditions were right this summer, implementation of wetlands have been continuously steady, with multiple projects being completed already.

The excavation work along Flook and Hinton drain has been completed, with many habitat features being implemented including offline wetlands, inline ponds, sedimentation ponds, irrigation ponds, newbury weirs, turtle beach and snake hibernaculum. This site was showcased in our cultivating conservation tour this year.

Two wetlands have been completed for DUC outside of the LTVCA watershed, in Essex and in Chatham-Kent. Multiple site visits have been completed in the Essex Region, with another wetland targeted to start shortly.

With harvest in full swing, the remaining wetland projects are waiting on the crops to come off before they can be implemented. October will continue to be a busy month as all the remaining projects are looking to be completed before the wet weather arrives.

Completed Wetland Projects:



Chatham Wetland – 0.4 acres



Iona Station Wetland – 0.3 acres



Blenheim Wetland – 1 acres



Charing Cross Wetland – 0.5 acres



Charing Cross Wetland – 0.25 acres



Charing Cross Wetland – 0.25 acres

DUC Out of Watershed Projects:



Croton Wetland – 0.75 acres



Jack Miner Wetland – 1 acre

ALUS Middlesex

ALUS Middlesex has had a busy start to the fall season monitoring past projects, establishing new projects, and attending outreach events - including recent attendance at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show. With over 37,000 attendees and 650 exhibitors, ALUS staff hosted a booth and were able to reach farmers from across the country, developing project new leads, interfacing with potential partners, and greatly boosting visibility of the program.



Program Director, Elise Gabrielli, speaking to an engaged attendee at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show



ALUS Middlesex summer student Lela Burt conducts monitoring on a wetland project.

During the fall months, staff are busy reaching out to landowners and conducting monitoring visits, providing the necessary support to landowners as well as giving valuable facetime. Monitoring visits are important to check project health, provide support and technical guidance to landowners, as well as feel out new project leads. These annual visits help to ensure projects are producing and effective, as well as grant valuable insight into new project implementation.



This three-part project features tree planting, Tallgrass prairie, and wetland restoration to improve water quality in the Lower Thames River watershed.

In other ALUS news, October marked a significant program development as Program Director Elise Gabrielli and her family welcomed the birth of their new son, Jack Antonio. Elise has been an indispensable part of the ALUS Middlesex team and we wish the best to her and her family as she takes her maternity leave during this joyous time.

ALUS Elgin

Highlights:

- Oden's wetland has been completed
- Approx. \$57,000 leveraged from ALUS Canada
- 2 permit applications for wetland projects submitted to LTVCA
- 3 site visits for recently established and potential new projects held
- Presentation material in development for ALUS Elgin's presentation at the Great Lakes Coastal Assembly Conference.



Fenti Wetland



Oden Wetland

General Summary October:

Site visits have brought forth potential new grassland, tree, and wetland establishments. I've also been focusing on strengthening our relationships with landowners; after hearing that some new and older participants felt disconnected, I prioritized reaching out and chatting with them.

In terms of finances, I'm thrilled to share that we've successfully leveraged about \$57,000 from two ALUS Canada grants. This funding will support project establishment, annual payments and may be used toward staff time.

I've been working on presentation materials for the Great Lakes Coastal Assembly Conference, which will be held in early October. It's exciting to be selected to present, and I look forward to sharing our work with a broader audience.

Behind the scenes, I'm working on completing our database integrity exercise, which is meant to clarify details on our database. Lastly, but certainly not least, I'm searching for plant availability for a potential fall tree planting and wetland enhancement project. Fingers crossed, we find some great species (if not, we'll plan to plant them in the spring/summer)!

Highlights

- Wetland site seeded with wildflowers
- New project established Fengi wetland (see photo)
- New wetland establishment plans for next week are set
- 3 new projects planned for 2025
- Almost done with my presentation material for the Great Lakes Coastal Conference (GLCC)

General Summary September

Continued to contact and keep in touch with landowners and partner projects to ensure our program's new and existing relationships continue to strengthen. It's been really nice reconnecting with projects on the ground and introducing the program to newly interested landowners. One new landowner is excited to have their project established later this month, and we plan to put another one in next Spring.

On the topic of new projects, we've worked closely with Betsy McClure to enroll another wetland in the program, which brings us closer to fulfilling our wetland deliverables for this year.

Beyond project establishment, working on program outreach by organizing material to be shared during attendance at the GLCC conference and preparing posts to share on our lonely social media accounts (as soon as our program email is updated—which should be soon—I'll have access to our accounts to post).

And, as usual, our administrative tasks related to project/program finances, expense tracking, and allocation and database updating continue.

ALUS Chatham-Kent

The 4th annual Cultivating Conservation Tour, celebrating ALUS CK's 5th year in Chatham-Kent, was a great success! Four ALUS CK projects were featured – an established wetland, a wetland complex and wildlife corridor currently being established, a mature tallgrass prairie, and exclusion fencing and alternative watering for livestock. After the tour, we gathered at Red Barn for a dinner and honored our long-time PAC Chair, Mike Buis, and Amanda Blain - two people who led ALUS CK from the very beginning and who continue to contribute to the success of ALUS in Chatham-Kent. Following the event, two positive news articles were published about the Cultivating Conservation Tour!



(L-R) ALUS Chatham-Kent Program Coordinator Rashel Tremblay speaks to guests of the Cultivating Conservation Tour; Kerr-Wilson Wetland Complex; Demonstration Sign for a Tallgrass Prairie Site; Mature Wetland.

Excavation is almost complete for 2 wetlands that have been delayed since 2023. A new wetland complex in South Kent added new wildlife features – a turtle beach and a hibernaculum (for overwintering snakes). Left to complete for 2024 is an 8-acre tallgrass pollinator project, a 2-acre tallgrass riparian buffer and a 1.75-acre tallgrass prairie buffer on a municipal drain.



Excavation begins on a 7-acre parcel of poorly draining muck land near Highgate.

In August we gave a tour of ALUS CK & LTVCA pollinator project sites to a representative of the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF). Through our collaboration with CWF, we're able to plant high-forb native seeds to support pollinators, for farmers who request it. A heron flew up from the new wetland as we approached, and we were pleasantly surprised to find several different species of native forbs in bloom, after only being planted in early June!



In September we completed our 2-year tree survival assessments, attended FarmFest 2024 at Red Barn, collected tree seeds, and continued to attend site visits to line up projects for 2025.

The ALUS Chatham-Kent PAC met on September 19th. Ten projects were presented for approval – 6 tree projects, 3 wetland enrolments and 1 tallgrass prairie buffer. The PAC approved 7,400 trees, to be planted in the spring of 2025, and approved the enrolment of close to 30 new acres.

The PAC decided to accept letters of interest from Chatham-Kent residents who want to join the PAC. Interested farmers, or folks who work in agriculture or conservation, are invited to attend our meeting on November 21st, 2024, where they can hand in their applications for consideration and see a PAC meeting in action. The PAC will discuss applications at our December meeting. Get in touch with us if you, or someone you know, is interested and we will send you a letter of intent to apply!

Urban Stewardship

Over the past few months, our urban stewardship initiatives have made significant strides, particularly through a series of successful tree-planting efforts and ecological restoration projects across the region. In total, we planted over 400 trees in various community spaces, with strong support from local volunteers and corporate partners. These plantings included 120 trees in two urban parks in Talbotville, funded by Tree Canada, with the help of 25 volunteers from the community and local Kiwanis clubs. Additionally, 40 trees were planted in Somerset Park, Chatham-Kent, through the Enbridge Fueling Futures program, with the support of 23 volunteers. Our annual TD Tree Days event also saw 31 TD Bank volunteers plant 140 trees along the Community Services pathway and skatepark green space. Other plantings included 35 trees at Ellis Park in Chatham with 11 volunteers from Woodbridge Factory, and 37 trees at Tecumseh Park, Chatham, in partnership with the Chatham Kiwanis group.



Volunteers from Enbridge (top) & Woodbridge Factory (bottom) planting trees



Volunteers from TD Bank (left) & Southwold Kiwanis Club (right) planting trees

Beyond the tree planting, we continued efforts to restore and enhance local ecosystems. In Blenheim, 15 volunteers from Troop 19 Chatham Scouts contributed to planting over 750 pollinator plugs around a newly created wetland, further boosting habitat restoration and supporting local biodiversity. We also collaborated with the Thames Art Gallery to organize a successful Thames River clean-up, held in conjunction with the newly opened GardenShip and State exhibition. The exhibition brings together 21 artists and writers who engage in decolonial critique, environmental activism, and twenty-first century artistic practices to address what is arguably the problem of our times: environmental catastrophe. The event attracted approximately 20 volunteers, who participated both on foot and by canoe, helping to remove litter from the Thames River at the Thames Grove Conservation Area. This community effort highlights the ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and raising awareness about local ecological issues.



Volunteer picking up garbage at Thames Grove CA (left) and Scouts planting pollinator plugs (right)

Additionally, our team focused on skill-building and community outreach. An urban stewardship staff member attended the in-class portion of the Certified Seed Collectors Course at Somerville Seedlings in Everett, bringing valuable expertise to share at upcoming volunteer seed collection events. We also participated in the annual Paw Parade, hosted by Carolinian Canada, attending an educational workshop in London and receiving 10 pairs of Paw Paw trees to distribute to the community. Lastly, we secured the ECCC EcoAction Community Funding Grant of \$98,250, which will support our stewardship initiatives over the next four years, bolstering our capacity for ongoing restoration efforts.



Paw Paw trees from the Paw Paw Parade



Certified Seed Collection Course

10.6.2) Agricultural Program

On-Farm Applied Research & Monitoring (ONFARM) Program



The ONFARM program was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness and is delivered by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association. LTVCA staff has been busy conducting edge-of-field water samples during early August. In total, 65mm of rain was recorded in two heavy thunderstorms at the Merlin sites. From these events, 46 samples were sent from the Merlin and Fairview sites for testing to evaluate key water quality parameters.

Following early Augusts' large rain events, there has been no major rain events. During this time, the LTVCA water monitoring staff have been diligently working on the use of the WISKI system. Up-to-date water quantity and quality data has been successfully uploaded to the WISKI Database for the ONFARM Merlin and Fairview sites. In the upcoming months, the data will be quality checked and analysed for project deliverables.



On August 9, LTVCA agriculture staff in collaboration with Field walker Agronomy Limited and ONFARM, installed a new weather station and soil moisture probe at the Fairview Edge-of-Field site. This weather station tracks a diverse array of parameters including precipitation, wind speed and direction, leaf wetness and soil temperature and moisture. This weather station provides the LTVCA with accurate, up-to-date data that is accessible and essential for the water monitoring procedure.

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agri-Business (OMAFRA)

During August of 2024, the LTVCA signed a new OMAFA-COA transfer payment agreement that will support a variety of agricultural based stewardship initiatives from 2024 to 2025. The purpose of the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA) is to restore, protect and conserve Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health. The OMAFA-LTVCA agreement is focused on activities that address the issue of excess nutrient loads with the objective to reduce harmful and nuisance algal blooms. The agreement includes a budget of \$86,000.00 and will support: 1. Chippewa of the Thames First Nation Agricultural and Water Management Plan 2. LTVCA Agricultural Stewardship Initiatives 3. Promoting Alternative Phosphorus Practices

4th Annual Cultivating Conservation Tour

The fourth annual Cultivating Conservation Tour occurred on Wednesday, September 11th of 2024 and was a big success! This year's tour also celebrated the five-year anniversary of Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS). The goal of this interactive tour was to increase awareness regarding regional environmental issues and to provide examples of solutions that can and have been implemented by local residents. The event targeted landowners in Chatham-Kent in close proximity to the Lake Erie basin. The self-guided tour included 6 stops which provided examples of; a tallgrass prairie, exclusion fencing for livestock management, cover crops, wetlands, tree planting and green infrastructure. Many of the featured sites were hosted by ALUS participants. 126 people registered for the event and 88 people were in attendance at the dinner. Each site had between 30- 55 visitors over the 3-hour period. The event concluded with a dinner and speeches at the Red Barn Brewing Company. The Cultivating Conservation Tour contributed to the OMAFA-COA objectives by promoting agricultural stewardship to reduce erosion and the transportation of soil and nutrients.

In-Field Soil Health Assessment Workshop

LTVCA staff attended the In-Field Soil Health Assessment Workshop hosted by the UTRCA, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), Soil Resource Group (SRG), Soils at Guelph, and Ontario Soil Network. Staff gained practical knowledge and skills from industry experts for assessing soil texture, structure, surface quality and residue evaluations of fields. This workshop helped fine-tune soil health evaluations skills and is imperative when considering soil best management practices (BMP) recommendations.



Agricultural Events

LTVCA staff attended multiple agricultural events in the Chatham-Kent area during the month of August. Educating and encouraging farmers to adopt Best Management Practices took place at the following events:

- Kent County Soil and Crop Improvement Association Summer Event on August 6, 2024
- Chatham-Kent Plow Match on August 10, 2024
- Farm Fest at Red Barn Brewing Company on August 31, 2024



Phosphorus Reduction

On Friday September 20, 2024 the LTVCA was invited by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, to join Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and Special Advisor for Water Terry Duguid and Member of Parliament for Windsor-Tecumseh, Irek Kusmierczyk in Windsor, ON. The event took place at the FREC lab and was hosted by the Great Lakes Institute of Environmental Research at the University of Windsor. The LTVCA Agricultural Program Coordinator and Manager of Watershed and Information Services attended the event alongside members from St. Clair Conservation Authority and Essex Region Conservation Authority. The purpose of the event was to announce and honour this year's funding recipients under the Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative (GLFEI). As one of the fifty projects receiving funding, the LTVCA is working towards the final stages of the agreement for the new Precision Phosphorus Reduction Program. This program will be delivered through Environment and Climate Change Canada from 2024-2028.



10.6.3) Aquatic Species at Risk (SAR)

Navigating the Waters of Fish Identification
ONTARIO REDHORSES

The Thames River is a popular destination for sport fishing. It is also home to many redhorse and sucker species, some of which are species at risk. Help to protect species at risk by learning to identify them and returning them to the water promptly. Fin colour, shape of the outer edge of the dorsal fin, the angle and grooves in the lower lip and the number of rays in each pelvic fin help to distinguish between the different redhorse species.

SILVER REDHORSE	GREY-TAILED BLACK REDHORSE	GOLDEN REDHORSE
Dorsal fin margin: usually convex Lips: fine horizontal grooves Lower lip angle*: slightly > 90° Pelvic rays: typically 9 Scales: dark bases <small>* lower lip angle is with the mouth closed</small>	Threatened • concave • no horizontal grooves • 120°-170° • rarely 10 • dark in front of the dorsal fin	• 90°-140° • typically 9 • centres lighter than edges in front of the dorsal fin
SHORTHEAD REDHORSE	RED-TAILED RIVER REDHORSE	GREATER REDHORSE
Lower lip: deep horizontal grooves Dorsal fin margin: concave Head and lips: small Scale bases: very dark	Special Concern • concave or straight • large • moderately dark	• no horizontal grooves • usually convex • large • dark

More information on local species at risk can be found at Report species at risk using the Naturalist app:

Two *Navigating the Waters of Fish Identification* educational factsheets have been posted to the LTVCA's SAR webpage. One will help fishers identify redhorses, a number of which are SAR, from look-alike species. The second will help identify four native lamprey species (Silver, Northern Brook, American Brook and Chestnut) from the non-native, parasitic Sea Lamprey. These factsheets will encourage fishers to return SAR, as well as all native species, back to the water as quickly as possible.

Temperature and dissolved oxygen data loggers continue to monitor environmental conditions experienced by fish and mussel SAR in the Thames River and Baptiste Creek.

Riparian habitat restoration and livestock exclusion projects have been completed or are in the planning stages under the leadership of the Stewardship team.

Terrestrial Species at Risk

Alexander Dabski completed his *Canada Summer Jobs* contract as a Wildlife Technician. He analyzed Song Meter Mini acoustic recordings from four locations within Rondeau Bay Marshes, Stirling, McGeachy Pond and C.M. Wilson Conservation Areas. One more station from C. M. Wilson Conservation Area remains to be analyzed. Final touches are being made to an associated draft report. Anabat Swift bat detectors were collected from the same conservation areas in early October.

Survey123 electronic forms for Anabat Swift and Song Meter Mini field data have been tested in the field and updated for both aquatic and terrestrial programs. Electronic forms save time and reduce the potential for transcription errors from hard copy field sheets.

10.7) Communications, Education and Outreach

10.7.1) Social Media

As of July 30, 2024 the **Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority's Facebook** page has 3,746 Followers, the **Instagram page for the Authority** has 1,334 Followers, and the Authority has 1,257 followers on X.

10.7.2) Communications and Outreach

This summer, a quarterly newsletter was launched to keep the public informed and engaged with our activities. The newsletter will be released seasonally, and will covers upcoming events, updates on LTVCA projects, and interesting facts. Our goal is to promote transparency and encourage public participation in the work we do. The first newsletter was distributed on July 19, followed by the fall edition on October 11. If you did not receive a copy, please email Amanda.Blain@ltvca.ca to be added to our mailing list.

We are currently seeking local businesses interested in sponsoring advertisement space in the 2025-2026 Conservation Area Guidebook. Various sponsorship options are available to suit the needs of any business. If you know of any potential sponsors or businesses that may be interested, please let us know. This is a great opportunity to support local conservation efforts while gaining visibility within the community.

10.7.3) Education Programming

Education staff from the Western District recently participated in the Harvest Days event at the University of Guelph's Ridgetown Campus from September 24-27. This four-day event focuses on teaching Grade 3 students about agriculture through interactive, educational sessions. The LTVCA's session provided a hands-on activity where students learned how to identify different soil types and gained an understanding of the importance of species at risk. It was an excellent opportunity to engage young learners in environmental stewardship and connect them with the agricultural landscape.



The program list for C.M. Wilson Learning Centre has been updated with a number of Indigenous Studies programs developed by the Indigenous Community Educator. There has already been some interest in these. Programming will offered more continually as we enter the winter season and updates to the education classroom at Wilson is completed.

Chatham-Kent and Lambton Children's Water Festival



The 13th annual Chatham-Kent Lambton Children's Water Festival is now complete. Approximately 2,100 elementary school students from 30 different schools in Chatham-Kent and Lambton attended this year's festival on October 1-3.

The students visited 40 different water activities, which were managed by 100 high school volunteers per day, and learned of the importance of water in everyday life.

The students had fun participating in the interactive activities while learning about water conservation, wastewater management, wildlife, our ecosystem, how to fish, how to identify invasive and native species, and much more. They were also treated to a magic show at lunch and left at the end of the day with smiles on their faces.

A special thank you to retiring coordinator of the festival Don Hector for his invaluable guidance.

Longwoods Road Conservation Area / Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum

During the summer months the Community Educator from the Eastern District departed. Since then, the Indigenous Community Educator from C.M. Wilson Learning Centre has been helping conduct education programs at Longwoods Road Conservation Area / Ska-Nah-Doht.

School bookings are thriving this fall, with all available dates up to mid-December being spoken for. It is anticipated that some teachers who were unable to book this fall will join us in the spring instead. Weekend Community Group Programs are currently on hold because of the number of school bookings and other staff commitments.

10.7.4) Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum

As of October 7, 2024 the **Ska-Nah-Doht Village's Facebook** page has 3,916 Followers. The **Instagram page for the Village** has 688 Followers.

Filming at Ska-Nah-Doht

Filming will take place at Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Longwoods Road Conservation Area on October 15-17, 2024. The production is being produced by a Chinese language production company and will include a night shoot.

Grant Funding

The Curator has successfully applied to the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation for funding to replace one of the accessibility ramps outside of the Carey Trail Kiosk. The ramp will be repaired this fall.

A successful application to Propel Student Work Placement Program (SWPP) through Tourism HR Canada has submitted to subsidize the wage of a co-op student from the University of Ottawa. They are a returning youth employee and will take on the role of Assistant Curator through December 20, 2024.

The Curator has also applied to the Westminster College Foundation for funding to offset the LTVCA portion of elevator construction.

Current Projects

The Curator and Assistant Curator are working on gallery updates and rotating exhibit plans. The Assistant Curator is also working on an Audio Guide / Tour proposal for the Museum and Village.

The Assistant Curator has completed an inventory of cultural belongings and artifacts on display in the Museum. They will be working with the Curator to conduct some conservation work on cultural belongings in storage as we prepare for large collection projects. The Curator and Assistant Curator will continue to work on a digitization plan for the Museum collection.

Accessibility ramps were added to the cabins in 2022. Now that these have settled paving stones are being purchased for installation under the ramp feet during a service call from Motion for ramp height adjustments. Following this, adjustments can either be made through a service call or by LTVCA staff.



NEWSLETTER



Rural Stewardship

Spring as usual was very busy for the stewardship team. Over 65,000 seedlings were ordered and over 35,000 were planted by the LTVCA across the watershed. Wetland restoration is underway and we are always accepting new projects throughout the year.

Agriculture Program

LTVCA staff continue work for the second phase of the On-Farm Applied Research and Monitoring (ONFARM) program. As part of this initiative, the LTVCA is collecting year-round water samples to understand the effects of Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) on water quality.

Urban Stewardship

- Within our watershed over 1800 large stock trees were planted by landowners and community groups.
- Chatham-Kent Secondary School constructed habitat boxes for bats and wood ducks, which will be given away to past project participants & other community members.
- Urban pollinator gardens are a great way to bring wildlife into any residential, school or work yard. This year we helped plant four pollinator gardens include the photo above at Chatham Christian School (see photo at top of page).

Conservation Areas

Construction for the new Indigenous Learning Centre is well underway. If you would like to contribute to the fundraising for this beautiful center please check out:

lowerthamesfoundation.ca



Upcoming Fall Events

- Cultivating Conservation Tour highlighting ALUS Chatham-Kent 5th anniversary (September 11; see attached invitation)
- Free Tree Giveaway (TBD)
- CK Paddle and Clean (September TBD)
- Precision Agriculture Workshop (November TBD)

ATTENTION TEACHERS: Get a head start on fall field trips! Book today for curriculum based conservation and Indigenous programs at Longwoods Road Conservation Area or C.M Wilson Conservation Area.

Past Events

- The Free Tree Giveaway funded by Chatham-Kent Community Foundation (See photo on right)
- Big "O" Birding Event
- Grand opening of the Wheatley Arboretum and Learning Trail
- Tilbury Horticultural Society Earth Day Event
- Battle of Longwoods
- Rain Barrel Sale
- Artifact Day



Water Department

Our water team went out in late spring to collect Benthic Invertebrates to be analyzed by the University of Windsor. Benthic Invertebrates are small aquatic animals and the small aquatic larval stages of insects such as dragonflies, snails, worms and beetles. We collect them because they are a great indicator for the biological conditions of a waterbody.

Landowner Highlight

Mike Hartery, a Chatham, ON landowner, has restored nearly 8 acres of land into trees this spring. This new planting connects to an existing 15-acre mature woodlot, creating important corridors for wildlife to travel safely away from modern dangers.

Interested in restoring land?
Contact: stewardship@ltvca.ca

Species At Risk (SAR)

Temperature and dissolved oxygen monitoring equipment was purchased for installation at an additional three sites along the Thames River and two Rondeau Bay tributary locations to assess temporal (seasonal and annual) changes to habitat conditions for SAR in these areas.

Conservation Tip

Watch out for Giant Hogweed this summer, exposure to sap on skin can cause serious skin irritations and/or severe burns. Check out the fact sheet attached.

If you are interested in any of our programs or events please keep an eye on our social media pages:



@ltvca



Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority



MINUTES

September 19, 2024

The meeting of the Ska-Nah-Doht Advisory Committee was held in person and via zoom at 4:30 P.M. on Thursday, September 19, 2024. The following members were in attendance: B. Bruinink, R. Doane, C. Parker, K. Loveland, S. Hipple, M. Peacock. Also, in attendance: A. Klages.

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

SND-2024-13 K. Loveland – C. Parker

Moved that the minutes of the May 31, 2024 meeting be approved.

CARRIED

2. Business for Approval

3. Business for Information

3.1) Staff Update

The Curator has taken on additional administrative roles while Administrative Assistant on leave.

Community Educator has resigned, hiring process ongoing.

Co-Op student has started in the role of Assistant Curator, will be on staff through December 20, 2024.

Weekend Visitor Services staff member continues through Thanksgiving.

3.2) Grant and Funding Updates

The Curator submitted the 2024 CMOG application on June 25, 2024. Work on the Digitization Plan continues with the support of the Assistant Curator. The Curator will be asking for 3D renders of

previously scanned cultural belongings¹; digitization will take place as artifacts are accessioned, are inventoried, or moved going forward.

Funding to replace the ramp at the Carey Trail Kiosk has been approved by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation.

Propel Student Work Placement Program (SWPP) through Tourism HR Canada for funding support for the Assistant Curator was deemed eligible. Waiting on next steps; link to be provided by Propel, supporting documents from the University of Ottawa have been received.

The Curator will be applying to the Westminster College Foundation for support for elevator construction by October 1, 2024.

3.3) Education Programs

The Curator is booking into December for the 2024/2025 school year. Discussions ongoing about programs will be possible in January – March 2024 as a result of the next phases of construction (information below). The Indigenous Community Educator from C.M. Wilson Conservation Area, and the Assistant Curator, will provide programming support while a new educator for Longwoods Road Conservation Area is hired.

A number of education programs took place throughout the summer.

3.4) Events and Workshops

As a result of staffing constraints and the lack of summer staff in 2024 only Artifact Day (attended by approximately 100 people). Fall events are on hold as hiring for the Community Educator role is completed.

The Curator will be participating in the 2024 Chatham-Kent Lambton Children's Water Festival, September 30 – October 3, 2024 participating as a Zone Leader. The Assistant Curator will attend the festival one day and keep the Museum open the remainder of the week.

Film crew will be on-site October 16-17, 2024. They will be filming on some trails at Longwoods Road Conservation Area and near the cabins but most filming will take place at the Village. Some cosmetic repairs will take place prior to filming.

3.5) Update on the Indigenous Education Centre

Limited subcontractor work remains for the extension; anticipate possession in coming weeks.

The Curator and Assistant Curator are working on exhibit updates for Museum and extension.

¹ Belongings or cultural belongings is currently the preferred term for referring to Indigenous archaeological artifacts.

The Curator has arranged for the London Children’s Museum to transfer some exhibit furniture to Ska-Nah-Doht. Likely to take place in December 2024. Some times will be repurposed or will need minor repairs.

The construction process for the LULA lift, as well as renovations to the basement washrooms and existing staff office will take place in the coming months. Elevator construction must be complete by end of March 2025.

3.6) Village and Cabin Updates

Accessibility ramps at the cabins will be adjusted by Motion this fall. Feet will be put on paving stones to disperse weight and prevent sinking. Staff will be able to make adjustments going forward.

The Community Educator, completed inspections (see appendix) of the Village and Heritage Log Cabins in May of 2024. Replacement of cabin roofs will take place in 2025. Some smaller improvements to the Village will take place this fall. The Easter District Supervisor is looking into dates for palisade repairs. A new cedar post supplier will need to be found.

The Village and Heritage Log Cabins are being added to the LTVCA Asset Management Plan.

SND-2024-14 R. Doane – S. Hipple

Moved that item 3.1 – 3.6 be received for information.

CARRIED

4. Other Business

5. Next Meeting Date

November 14, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.

March 20, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

6. Adjournment

SND-2024-15 K. Loveland – C. Parker

Moved that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

Chair

Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

11. Correspondence

11.1) Conservation Ontario's comments on the Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument (ERO# 019-8462)



May 10, 2024

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Provincial Land Use Plans Branch
777 Bay Street, 13th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

RE: Conservation Ontario's comments on the "Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument" (ERO# 019-8462)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the "Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument." Conservation Ontario is the network of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities (CAs). These comments are not intended to limit the consideration of comments shared individually by CAs. This letter provides general comments on the proposed policies and Attachment 1 provides responses to the consultation questions provided in the Environmental Registry notice.

Conservation Authorities play a key role within Ontario's land use planning and development framework. As prescribed through the Mandatory Programs and Services Regulation (O. Reg. 686/21), CAs review and comment on applications and other matters submitted pursuant to the *Planning Act* to help ensure consistency with the natural hazard policies found within policy statements issued under section 3 of the *Planning Act*, as well as the protection of drinking water sources.

Conservation Ontario is pleased with the proposed references to CA roles in natural hazard management and mitigation (see 5.2(1)) and watershed planning (see 4.2(5)), as well as promoting collaboration between CAs, planning authorities and the Province (see Vision [wise use and management of resources]). The proposed change to policy 5.2(1) requiring planning authorities to collaborate with CAs (where they exist) to identify hazardous lands and sites to manage development in such areas, is particularly welcome.

CAs apply an integrated watershed management perspective through their plan review and permitting roles which considers local conditions, potential flooding and erosion impacts to upstream and downstream communities, and future management challenges. This perspective is informed by natural hazard mapping, modelling, and knowledge of local

watershed conditions and ongoing/planned projects. This coordinated, scientific and hazard/risk-based approach used by CAs was strongly supported by Ontario's Special Advisor on Flooding in their 2019 report.

When planning for development in new or existing communities, the Province, planning authorities, and Conservation Authorities are required to work together to protect people, property and infrastructure from potential risks resulting from natural and human-made hazards. Conservation Ontario notes that language in the Vision section of the proposed PPS, 2024 is inconsistent with the proposed natural hazards policies (e.g., "mitigation" of risks associated with natural and human made hazards versus direction in policy 5.1.1 to direct development away from natural hazards where there is unacceptable risk to public health or safety or of property damage). To ensure a consistent approach with proposed policy 5.1.1 of the PPS, 2024, Conservation Ontario recommends the Vision section be amended to read "Potential risks to public health or safety or of property damage from natural hazards and human-made hazards, including the risks associated with the impacts of climate change, will be avoided, and where not possible, mitigated".

The provincial planning system has undergone significant changes in recent years, including several consultations on the replacement of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2020 and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe ("Growth Plan"). Upon issuance of the new PPS, planning authorities and CAs will require time to focus on implementation of updated provincial policy and legislation. To support successful implementation and increase consistency and certainty regarding planning outcomes, Conservation Ontario recommends the Province provide comprehensive implementation guidance for the proposed PPS in a timely manner. A list of the required implementation guidance is included in Attachment 1.

Ultimately, the efficacy of the proposed PPS policies hinges upon the ability to apply them through planning processes. For example, Bill 185 currently proposes amendments to the *Planning Act* to create regulations that provide for the non-application of any provision of the Act to community service facilities, including institutional uses. The Province is urged to ensure that applications involving institutional uses continue to be subject to the PPS such that the appropriate planning safeguards are in place to direct development outside of hazardous lands and hazardous sites, and areas where safe access through a hazard cannot be achieved. It is recommended that any proposed exemptions from the *Planning Act* and subsequently, the PPS, should be subject to the development being outside of a natural hazard area, where safe access can be achieved, and where no restrictions are required to protect the quality and quantity of drinking water supplies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the "Review of proposed policies for a new provincial planning policy instrument" (ERO#019-8462). Comprehensive provincial policy must strike the appropriate balance on all matters of provincial interest. This balance will not only support the government's initiative to increase the supply and

diversity of housing in Ontario, but also provide for the continued protection of people, property and infrastructure from the impacts of natural hazards, drinking water sources, and natural spaces that support safe and healthy communities. Should this letter require any clarification, please contact Brandi Walter at bwalter@conservationontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Brandi Walter

Brandi Walter
Policy and Planning Liaison

Leslie Rich

Leslie Rich, RPP
Source Water Protection Manager

Attachment: Conservation Ontario's Feedback on the Proposed Policy Concepts and Proposed Wording for a New Provincial Planning Policy Instrument.

c.c. All Conservation Authorities' CAOs / GMs

Conservation Ontario
120 Bayview Parkway, Newmarket ON L3Y 3W3
www.conservationontario.ca

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Attachment 1: Conservation Ontario's Feedback on the Proposed Policy Concepts and Proposed Wording for a New Provincial Planning Policy Instrument

Conservation Ontario offers the following responses to the consultation questions provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) on the Environmental Registry proposal. These responses should be read in conjunction with the general comments provided in Conservation Ontario's covering letter.

1. What are your overall thoughts on the updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement?

- Conservation Ontario is pleased with the reference in the Vision section to the Province, planning authorities and CAs working together to mitigate potential impacts on development or risks to public health and safety associated with natural hazards, including the risks associated with the impacts of a changing climate.
- In addition to the proposed references for collaboration and coordination with CAs, Conservation Ontario continues to recommend CAs be explicitly referenced in policy 6.2(1) as a part of the "coordinated, integrated and comprehensive approach...when dealing with planning matters". The integration of CAs throughout the proposed Provincial Planning Statement is a positive step forward to continue protecting people, property and infrastructure from potential impacts of natural hazards as well as protecting sources of drinking water.
- Conservation Ontario notes that the Province is not proposing to carry forward policy 1.1.1(c) from the PPS, 2020 which emphasizes the need for healthy, livable and safe communities to avoid development which may cause environmental or public health and safety concerns. The development of safe and healthy communities and the protection and conservation of ecological systems and natural resources are identified as matters of provincial interest under section 2 of the *Planning Act*. As mentioned in the covering letter, the proposed Vision section states that "Potential risks to public health or safety or of property damage from natural hazards and human-made hazards, including the risks associated with the impacts of climate change will be **mitigated**" (*emphasis added*). This represents an unacceptable departure from the Province's commitment to directing development away from natural hazards; potentially increasing the risk to people and property. The Provincial "Understanding Natural Hazards" Technical Guide, identifies that prevention measures, including "good land use planning, development and management, and the regulation of hazardous lands and unsafe developments" is the first and most important step. The efficacy of this preventative approach was recently re-confirmed by the "Independent Review of the 2019 Flood Events in Ontario" as well as "Ontario's Flooding Strategy". A suggested revision is provided in the covering letter.

- 2. What are your thoughts on the ability of updated proposed policies to generate appropriate housing supply, such as: intensification policies, including the redevelopment of underutilized, low density shopping malls and plazas; major transit station area policies; housing options, rural housing and affordable housing policies; and student housing policies?**
- Section 5.1 in the proposed PPS, 2024 states that development shall generally be directed to areas away from hazardous lands and hazardous sites. The proposed PPS must ensure that, in accordance with the natural hazard policies (section 5.2) and water policies (section 4.2), intensification does not occur in hazardous lands or on hazardous sites, where safe access through the hazard cannot be achieved, or where development should be restricted to protect the quality and quantity of drinking water supplies.
 - CAs remain committed to working with the Province, Municipalities, and other partners in support of increasing the overall supply and diversity of housing types in Ontario while maintaining strong protections for public health, safety, and the environment.
- 3. What are your thoughts on the ability of the updated proposed policies to make land available for development, such as: forecasting, land supply, and planning horizon policies; settlement area boundary expansions policies; and employment area planning policies?**
- Existing policy 2.2.8.3 in the Growth Plan requires planning authorities to determine the feasibility of proposed boundary expansions based on the application of all policies within the Growth Plan. This includes ensuring that the proposed expansion would be planned and demonstrated to avoid, or if not possible, minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts on watershed conditions and the water resource system, including the quality and quantity of water. Conservation Ontario continues to recommend this policy be brought forward into section 2.3.2 of the proposed Provincial Planning Statement (New Settlement Areas and Settlement Area Boundary Expansions) for “large and fast-growing municipalities.” This inclusion would provide consistency with policies related to using the watershed as the meaningful scale for integrated and long-term planning.
- 4. What are your thoughts on updated proposed policies to provide infrastructure to support development?**
- Policies in section 4.2 encourage all municipalities and require large and fast-growing municipalities to undertake watershed planning to inform planning for several purposes, including planning for sewage and water services. Conservation Ontario is pleased with policies in section 4.2 that now encourage all municipalities to collaborate with applicable CAs when undertaking watershed planning. The proposed changes to the definition of watershed planning are further supported which relate watershed planning to the evaluation and consideration of impacts of a changing climate on water resources systems and clarify that the process can be

undertaken at many scales.

- A list of “large **and** fast-growing municipalities” is provided in Schedule 1 of the proposed PPS, 2024. Further to proposed policy 4.2, these municipalities would be required to undertake watershed planning to inform planning for several purposes. While Conservation Ontario notes that all municipalities are “encouraged” to undertake watershed planning, the requirement to do so would not capture smaller municipalities currently experiencing rapid growth. Such municipalities would benefit from undertaking watershed planning to inform how best to manage and plan for growth, rather than waiting until a time where they may meet the criteria to be designated a “large municipality,” and mitigative options identified through watershed planning would be more limited.
- Conservation Ontario is pleased with the amendments to policy 3.6.8 (“planning for stormwater management”) which provides direction related to minimizing, preventing or reducing increases in stormwater volumes. This direction is a positive addition and will ensure planning authorities have regard to increased volumes which may contribute to pluvial and fluvial flooding in developed areas from stormwater flows.
- Existing policy 3.2.7 of the Growth Plan has not been carried forward into the proposed PPS, 2024, which requires municipalities to develop stormwater master plans that are informed by watershed planning or equivalent, and examine / assess cumulative impacts to stormwater from development, including how impacts are exacerbated during extreme weather events. This policy is significant for mitigating impacts associated with a changing climate within Ontario’s communities. Conservation Ontario recommends this policy be retained for large and fast-growing municipalities.
- Conservation Ontario supports the new proposed policy 2.3.2.2 that requires planning authorities to “identify a new settlement area only where it has been demonstrated that the infrastructure and public service facilities to support development are planned or available.”

5. What are your thoughts on updated proposed policies regarding the conservation and management of resources, such as requirements to use an agricultural systems approach?

- Conservation Ontario is pleased with the integration of CAs with respect to identification of hazardous lands and sites, and management of development in those areas.
- As noted in comments on previous consultation about the PPS, Conservation Ontario supports the proposal to keep the natural heritage policies and related definitions analogous to those in the PPS 2020. Natural heritage features such as forests and wetlands play important roles in reducing flows, storing floodwaters, and mitigating drought. The natural heritage, water resource and natural hazard systems are inextricably linked, and coordinated protection of these systems is necessary to mitigate potential impacts associated with natural hazards, protect

drinking water sources, and provide access to green / open space which contribute to the development of safe, sustainable, and complete communities.

6. What are your thoughts on any implementation challenges with the updated proposed Provincial Planning Statement? What are your thoughts on the proposed revocations in O. Reg. 311/06 (Transitional Matters - Growth Plans) and O. Reg. 416/05 (Growth Plan Areas)?

- Conservation Ontario continues to recommend that the Province provide comprehensive, up-to-date implementation guidance concurrently with the issuance of the updated Provincial Planning Statement. It is noted that the proposed policies are quite flexible and may result in additional Ontario Land Tribunal hearings without adequate interpretation support. Comprehensive and up-to-date guidance with ongoing implementation support from the Province would help to increase consistency and certainty regarding planning outcomes, resulting in more timely approvals.
- Specifically, the Province should consider updating and/or finalizing the following: the Natural Hazard Technical Guides, the 1993 Watershed Planning Guidelines, the 2022 Subwatershed Planning Guide, and the Natural Heritage Reference Manual (and related guidance). Updated implementation guidance should include direction on planning for a changing climate, particularly with regard to natural hazard management, watershed/subwatershed planning, and stormwater management.

11.2) Donation from United Way of Chatham-Kent of small United Way Building



United Way
Chatham-Kent

425 McNaughton Avenue W
Chatham, ON N7M
519.437.5580
uwock.ca

Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
100 Thames Street
Chatham, ON N7L 2Y8
Attn: Mark Peacock, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
mark.peacock@ltvca.ca

October 7, 2024

Dear Mr. Peacock,

Re: Donation from United Way of Chatham-Kent of small United Way Building

We are writing today on behalf of the United Way of Chatham-Kent (UWOCK).

Our Board of Directors has reflected on the change in donation capacity for the small building at the Children's Safety Village, on the land now managed by the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority. The building represented is no longer owned by United Way.

As we are closing the operation of UWOCK, we are pleased to entrust this building to your registered charitable organization. Please find enclosed our keys to the building. The book value of this asset is \$17,000.00.

If you have further questions or require further information, please contact Maureen Geddes at 519.437.5580 or at maureen@uwock.ca.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Chris Appleton in black ink.

Chris Appleton
President, Board of Directors
United Way of Chatham-Kent

Handwritten signature of Maureen Geddes in black ink.

Maureen Geddes
Chief Executive Officer
United Way of Chatham-Kent

12. Other Business

13. Adjournment
