

GRCA Current



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GRCA General Membership

Chair	Helen Jowett
Vice-Chair	Chris White
Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon and Southgate and Town of Grand Valley	Guy Gardhouse
Townships of Mapleton and Wellington North	Pat Salter
Township of Centre Wellington	Kelly Linton
Town of Erin, Townships of Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch	Chris White
City of Guelph	Bob Bell, Mike Salisbury
Region of Waterloo	Les Armstrong, Elizabeth Clarke, Sue Foxton, Helen Jowett, Geoff Lorentz, Jane Mitchell, Joe Nowak, Wayne Roth, Sandy Shantz, Warren Stauch
Municipality of North Perth and Township of Perth East	George Wicke
Halton Region	Cindy Lunau
City of Hamilton	George Stojanovic
Oxford County	Bruce Banbury
County of Brant	Brian Coleman, Shirley Simons
City of Brantford	Dave Neumann, Vic Prendergast
Haldimand and Norfolk Counties	Bernie Corbett, Fred Morison

Success in 2016 for the Foundation

The Grand River Conservation Foundation had a successful year.

While the final numbers haven't yet been calculated, it looks like the Foundation raised \$1 million in 2016. This will go towards GRCA projects with few or no other sources of funding. In 2015, GRCF disbursed about \$940,000 for conservation work.

The GRCF is similar to a hospital foundation, because it supports the conservation authority by raising funds for projects related to the GRCA.

About 600 donors made contributions during the year. This includes the biggest donation in two decades that was made by Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada (\$250,000) and is being used to expand winter programs at Grand River Parks.

Work on the new Guelph Lake Nature Centre learning grounds is underway with Foundation funding, and renovations have also been undertaken to improve accessibility at Apps' Mill Nature Centre.

Priorities for 2017 include the new Guelph Lake Nature Centre and work to improve trails and boardwalks at FWR Dickson Wilderness Area near Cambridge.

Donations can always be accepted online at www.grcf.ca.

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow

You might not mind the snow as much if you know that it is helping to alleviate the dry conditions within the watershed that persisted through most of 2016.

Precipitation was high in December, with lots of snow, but it also rained during warmer days. The warmer periods allowed the snow to melt and enter the Grand River system.

This brought most reservoir levels up to more

seasonal levels for the time of year. It also increased river flows, which had been very low.

More snowmelt is needed to fill the reservoirs by the spring.

GRCA winter programming launched January 3

The GRCA launched its winter programming on January 3.

Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing will be offered at Laurel Creek, Pinehurst Lake and Shade's Mills when conditions are suitable. Equipment rental may be available at these locations on weekends only.

Ice fishing will be offered at Pinehurst Lake and Shade's Mills this winter when conditions allow. Ice thickness is monitored daily to ensure the ice thickness meets safety requirements.

Hiking is available at Belwood Lake and Rockwood, but these parks don't provide a formal winter program and services are limited to parking, waste bin removal and signage.

Call the individual park to find out about winter activities. Check www.grandriver.ca/events to find out about events at the nature centres during the winter.

Hydrology update

The GRCA is starting to update its hydrology modeling software and is hiring Resource Management Associates Inc. to do the work.

Software is used for hydrology modelling and flood forecasting. Last year, the province gave funds to the GRCA to evaluate a new hydrology model to be used in Ontario. It was developed by the U.S. Army Corps Hydrologic Engineering Center.

Last year's evaluation found that it is the preferred hydrology model for the future in Ontario. It has many advantages, including that it provides real-time flood forecasting to manage the Grand River system. It can also be integrated with



other technology used by conservation authorities in Ontario.

The old hydrology modeling software was developed at the University of Guelph and may not be supported in coming years. For this reason, work is underway to replace it.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is providing \$100,000 to adapt the hydrology software so that it can be used in Ontario by the GRCA and other conservation authorities and has transferred the funds to the GRCA for this purpose. The hydrology software is one part of the overall forecasting framework.

The work is expected to be completed in 2017.

Warm temperatures and rain in early January

Warm weather and light rain spread across the Grand River watershed in early January.

Much of the rain was absorbed into the snow pack. As a result, snowmelt was gradual and didn't cause flooding.

The GRCA issued a Watershed Conditions Statement due to water safety, urging people to exercise caution around all water bodies. Banks next to rivers and creeks become slippery when the temperature changes and they pose a serious hazard.

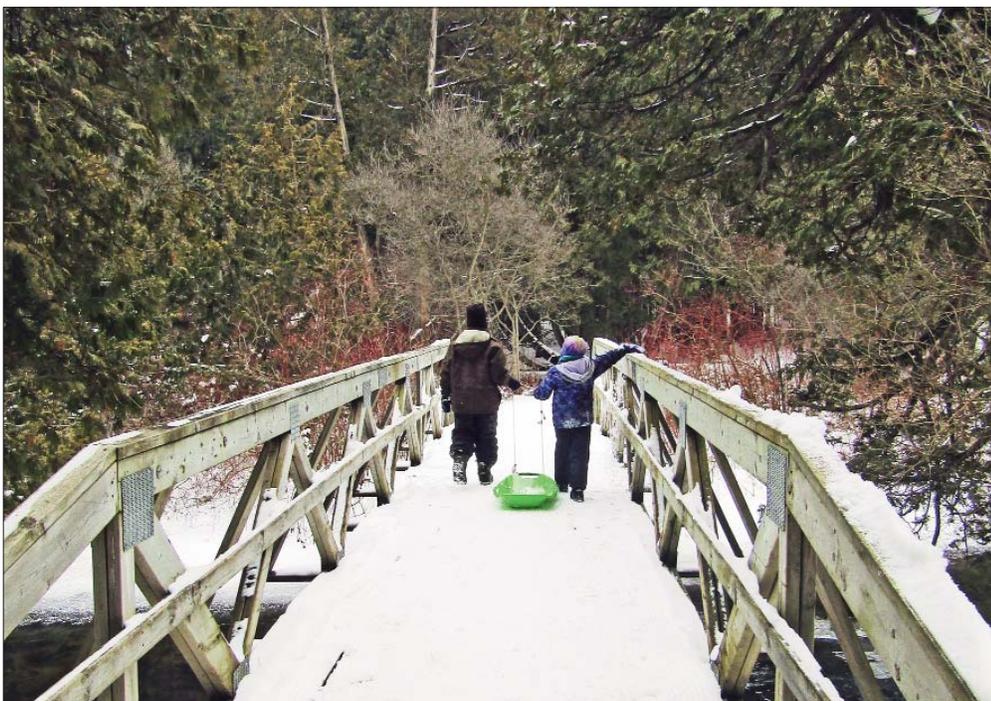
Parents are encouraged to keep their children and pets away from all watercourses and off frozen water bodies, which may be weakened when the weather becomes warm.

Student summer jobs now posted

The GRCA hires well over 200 students during the summer to work in Grand River Parks and recruiting got underway at the end of December.

Student jobs are posted on the GRCA website in the careers section and include positions such as lifeguards, gate staff, security and concession attendants. The positions are available at the GRCA's 11 parks and a few others will be available for head office in Cambridge.

The deadline to apply for most student positions is Feb. 20, however a few positions may be posted later.



Winter programming at Grand River Parks launched January 3. This photo was taken by Jenny Schwing at Shades' Mills Park and was one of the submissions to the GRCA photo contest.

Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

In February 2016, the governments of Canada and the United States adopted a binational target to reduce total phosphorus entering Lake Erie by 40 per cent.

To meet this target, the two countries will develop Domestic Actions Plans by February 2018. The conservation authorities that manage river systems draining into Lake Erie have a significant role in working to achieve the target.

The Great Lakes Advisory Board serves in an advisory capacity to the International Joint Commission. GRCA staff will participate in a workshop on February 1-2 where the advisory board will seek input on how to best achieve the nutrient reduction targets for Lake Erie.

GRCA staff members continue to participate on a number of working groups related to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, dealing with issues of climate change and nutrient loading.

Sign up to receive news and newsletters online

Anyone can sign up to receive specific types of news in their inbox on the GRCA website at www.grandriver.ca/subscribe,

including this newsletter.

There are several categories of news so that individuals receive what they are interested in. These include farm and landowner information, flood messages, the Grand Actions newsletter (sent out four to six times a year), GRCA Current (this monthly publication), The Grand newsletter (an annual publication), low water messages and park events and activities.

This issue of *GRCA Current* was published in January, 2017.

It is a summary of the December, 2016 business conducted by the Grand River Conservation Authority board and committees, as well as other noteworthy happenings and topics of interest.

The Grand River Conservation Authority welcomes distribution, photocopying and forwarding of *GRCA Current*.

Next board meeting:

January 27 at 9:30 a.m.,
GRCA Administration Centre

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