

## GRCA General Membership

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

## Camping closes October 15

The 2017 camping season at Grand River Parks is coming to a successful close on October 15.

Five parks will remain open to daytime visitors this fall. They are Belwood Lake Park near Fergus, Shade's Mills Park in Cambridge, Laurel Creek Park in Waterloo, Rockwood Park and Pinehurst Lake near Ayr.

Park revenue is on track to match that of 2016, which was an exceptional year. The 2017 park revenue is \$8 million to date. This is higher than the projected revenue of \$7.3 million, which was in the 2017 budget.

Plans are underway to offer winter programs, such as cross-country skiing, ice fishing and snowshoeing. These activities are highly dependent on weather.

## Commemorative stone installed at Dumfries CA

A commemorative stone and sitting area were installed at Dumfries Conservation Area in September to remember Percy Hilborn (1886-1972), who donated the 75-hectare property.

An early environmentalist, Hilborn bought farmland from 1916 to 1967 in order to preserve some untouched green space in the heart of Cambridge. The land was initially donated to the province, which later turned it over to the GRCA to manage.

The park has four kilometres of trails, as well as natural and plantation forests. In recent years, the City of Cambridge and the GRCA have enlisted the help of community volunteers at special events to remove invasive plants and plant native Carolinian trees and shrubs.

Two benches, donated by BWXT Canada, formerly Babcock and Wilcox, are near the commemorative rock, creating a sitting area with native plants and shrubs nearby. Entry to the conservation area is off of Dunbar Road, west of Hespeler Road. There is no admission fee.

The commemorative stone was unveiled by two

of Hilborn's children, Elinor Hueton and John Hilborn. They thought it was especially fitting to remember Percy 50 years after he made the donation and to mark Canada 150, which commemorates the creation of Canada in 1867.

## Fighting phragmites at Taquanyah

The first phase of a three-year plan to control phragmites at Taquanyah Conservation Area, just west of Cayuga, got underway September 29.

While phragmites is a problem throughout the province, it is especially important to control it at Taquanyah – one of only two locations in Ontario where an endangered plant, Virginia mallow, grows. Controlling phragmites is an essential step in ensuring that the Virginia mallow will continue to thrive in Taquanyah.

Phragmites, also known as the European common reed, is a tall grass with a fluffy seed head that grows densely and out competes native plants for water and nutrients.

A licensed pesticide applicator applied the herbicide glyphosate, which is better known by the trade name Roundup. This herbicide has been widely adopted by conservation organizations as a safe and effective way to remove invasive species.

Manual removal of phragmites plants around Virginia mallow is taking place in October. Follow-up treatments and an expansion of the treatment area will occur next fall.

Controlling phragmites is part of the larger restoration effort that has been ongoing at Taquanyah since the removal of the reservoir in 2005. A management plan for phragmites was developed in 2015 to map where it grows and come up with a plan to manage it.

## Order trees from the GRCA for spring 2018

Rural landowners can now order trees from the GRCA for planting next spring.



Landowners who have at least one hectare (2.5 acres) of land are eligible to order trees that they can plant themselves. Online tree orders can be placed October 2, 2017 to March 1, 2018, and orders can also be taken by mail. Ordering early is advisable for the best selection of trees.

Landowners with at least two hectares (five acres) of property may also be interested in having a GRCA forestry specialist come to their property to put together a planting plan, arrange for the planting of their trees, and help them to access funding programs to offset the cost of their tree planting project (if applicable).

There is no cost for this planning service, but demand is high, so interested landowners will be put on a waiting list to be contacted at a later date by one of the GRCA's forestry specialists. To be put on this waiting list, please email [trees@grandriver.ca](mailto:trees@grandriver.ca) or call 519-621-2761 and ask to speak to a forestry specialist.

For more information, to order trees and to view the tree availability list, go to the forestry section of the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca/Trees](http://www.grandriver.ca/Trees).

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## Blue-green algae

Observations by GRCA staff in mid-September confirmed that blue-green algae were present at Conestogo, Belwood and Woolwich reservoirs.

The algae may contain a toxin called microcystin, which can cause illness when ingested by people or animals. Park visitors, recreational users and cottagers surrounding these reservoirs should be aware of the algae and take necessary precautions.

There are several things that visitors can do to stay safe from blue-green algae. These include not swimming, keeping children and pets away, not drinking or using water for any other purpose and not eating fish from the lake. While boating is allowed (where permitted), boaters and recreational users should avoid touching the algae.

There have been no reports of human illness caused by these algae blooms.

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## Rainfall fairly consistent across the watershed

Precipitation during the first two weeks of September was fairly consistent across the



For the first time, the GRCA volunteer program offered a Professional Activity (PA) day activity for kids and their parents at Guelph Lake. They collected wildflower seeds and then planted them on the site of the new Guelph Lake Nature Centre.

watershed.

August was a more variable month, with 45 per cent to 154 per cent of the long-term average rainfall. Weather events took place frequently during August, but amounts varied, since most rain fell during localized storms.

Temperatures during the first couple of weeks of September were well below the long-term average, but it became hot later in the month.

Water levels in the four large reservoirs are near their normal operating level for the time of year. River flows have been above low-flow targets.

GRCA staff is working with the flood coordinator from Haldimand County to plan a desktop emergency planning exercise based on a flood emergency for November.

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## New preschool program at Shade's Mills

Shade's Mills Nature Centre in Cambridge is setting out in a new direction and offering a six-week outdoor exploration program for parents and preschool children on Wednesday mornings, called Wild Wee Ones, starting October 4.

The Wild Wee Ones program brings nature-based education that has long been

provided to school children by the GRCA to younger kids.

This program is ideal for parents or guardians who are looking for ways to connect their children with nature and the outdoors at an early age. The registration fee for non-members is \$70 or \$50 for Grand River Parks members. This covers an adult with one or two young children, age two-and-a-half to five. Register and learn more online at [www.grandriver.eventbrite.ca](http://www.grandriver.eventbrite.ca).

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

It is a summary of the September, 2017 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*.

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

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