

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	Kirk McElwain
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 Foxtan, 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

Variable rainfall

July started out very dry and ended with heavy rainfall in parts of the watershed.

Most areas of the watershed received more than half of the normal July rainfall over the last 10 days of the month. Some of the rain came during all-day soaking events, while other rain fell during short localized thunderstorms.

The dry conditions mean the reservoirs were used to increase flows in the rivers. About 80 per cent of the flow through Kitchener and close to 40 per cent of the flow through Brantford was from reservoir discharges. On the Speed River, close to 50 per cent of the flow below Guelph was from reservoir discharge.

Temperatures were well above the long-term average during the month, with daytime highs close to 30 C on many days. At the Shand Dam climate station, the average temperature during the first half of July was 22 C, which is 2.5 C above normal.

The GRCA reservoirs were at a normal operating level at the end of July. The level of Lake Erie continues to be above the long-term average.

Water conservation urged

A call for a voluntary 10 per cent cut in water use was made July 12 by the Grand River Low Water Response Team and this remains in effect.

The team is made up of representatives of major water users including municipalities, farmers, golf course operators, water bottlers, aggregate businesses, Six Nations and others.

Under the Ontario Low Water Response Program, the team placed the Grand River watershed in a Level 1 condition. Level 1 results in a request for a 10 per cent reduction in water consumption by all water users, including municipalities, aggregate operations, golf courses, water bottlers, farms for irrigation, as well as private users.

For residents, the most effective way to conserve water is to follow their municipal outdoor water use bylaws, which limit watering to specific days

and times.

The water in the reservoirs is released gradually during the summer and fall to ensure there is enough water to support the operation of municipal drinking water plants and wastewater treatment plants. Flow augmentation also helps support the overall health of the river system. Stream flow is low in many of the smaller watercourses, as well as those that do not receive flow augmentation from the reservoirs.

Water levels in the reservoirs will continue to be monitored throughout the summer to ensure flow targets can be maintained if dry conditions persist.

More information on the Low Water Response Program is available on the GRCA website at www.grandriver.ca.

Appointments to Foundation board

The GRCA approved one new member to the Grand River Conservation Foundation board and reappointed five members at the GRCA board meeting in July.

The new member is Kathy Reston, General Manager of Finance and Corporate Compliance at Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada (TMMC), a long-time Foundation partner.

The five reappointments are Floyd Davis of Burford, James den Ouden of Waterloo, Joel Doherty of Cambridge, Paul General of Six Nations and Joy O'Donnell of Brantford.

The Foundation has 15 volunteer board members from across the watershed. In addition, the Chair of the GRCA, Helen Jowett, sits on the board. The Chair is Malcolm Matheson, President of Steed and Evans in Heidelberg, and Wayne Fyffe of Paris, a retired health care executive, is the Vice-Chair of the board.

The Foundation was founded in 1965 and has raised more than \$13 million for a variety of GRCA programs and projects. In 2017, about 90 per cent of the contributions directly supported conservation. Learn more at www.grcf.ca.



Preparing for flooding

GRCA staff continue to meet with Community Emergency Management Coordinators (CEMCs) in Waterloo Region.

Some municipalities in the region are updating their emergency response plans for floods. The group is developing a generic template that will be adapted to the specific needs of each township. The GRCA assists by providing technical information and advice.

A meeting is taking place with the CEMCs in August to discuss the lessons learned from recent large floods and to share information, experiences and approaches.

Flow forecasting staff from Ontario Power Generation visited the GRCA in July to see how the GRCA collects and organizes information to support flood forecasting and notification.

Cover crop funding

Applications for cover crop funding can be submitted now for payment in spring 2019. The per-acre incentive is offered to applicants in Wellington, Brant, Haldimand and Dufferin counties, as well as Waterloo Region, through the GRCA's Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP).

The benefits of cover crops are numerous — they can reduce erosion, build better soil structure and improve soil health.

Over the last five years, more than 235 producers received the cover crop incentive. The rate varies by county program and is between \$20 and \$100 per acre. The municipalities fund this Rural Water Quality Program and the GRCA administers it.

More information is available about the cover crop program by contacting the GRCA at ruralwater@grandriver.ca or calling 519-621-2761 and asking to speak to a conservation specialist.

Park survey

The GRCA is taking steps to improve your experience at Grand River Parks and we're looking for feedback.

Take a few minutes to complete a short survey that is available at the gatehouse of each park. An online version is posted on www.grandriver.ca/parks. Both are available until September 3.



Day campers at Laurel Creek Nature Centre in Waterloo learned about forestry as they watched GRCA arborists cut down a maple tree over a pedestrian bridge.

The survey is designed to capture the opinions of current and recent park visitors. Your feedback is important. It will help us plan improvements to facilities and park user experiences, in order to serve you better.

To thank you for your time, you will have an opportunity to enter to win a Pelican Venture 100 kayak package, which includes a kayak, paddle, life jacket and boat safety kit, valued at approximately \$500. A Grand River Parks membership pass will also be awarded to one lucky winner.

Looking back to 1942

After the Shand Dam opened in August 1942, people flocked to the area to see it. It was Canada's first multipurpose dam and the biggest dam in Canada at the time.

By the late 1950s, Belwood Lake Park near Fergus had a boat launch, a picnic pavilion and a wading pool. Families would picnic at Belwood Lake and watch the motor boats and water skiers. This was still a new sport and a novelty to watch.

Now the park is very popular for day use visitors and it provides many recreational activities.

This issue of *GRCA Current* was published in August, 2018.

It is a summary of the July, 2018 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:
August 24 at 9:30 a.m.,
GRCA Administration Centre

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