



# GRCA Minutes

Grand River Conservation Authority, 400 Clyde Road, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 5W6  
Tel: (519) 621-2761 Fax: (519) 621-4844 Internet: [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)

**January 2007**  
**Volume 13 - No. 1**

## **GRCA** **General Membership**

**Chairman - Open**

**1st Vice-Chairman - Alan Dale**

**2nd Vice-Chairman - Vic Prendergast**

**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate - Tom Nevills**

**Townships of Mapleton and Wellington North - Pat Salter**

**Township of Centre Wellington - Shawn Watters**

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### **Many new faces on GRCA board**

The November municipal election has resulted in many changes in appointments to the GRCA board and more changes are expected in January.

The most notable change is that Peter Krause, who chaired the board for nine years, was not reappointed by the Region of Waterloo. Krause was a citizen appointee and Waterloo Regional Council has taken a new approach, by only appointing elected politicians and not citizen representatives to the GRCA board. Krause served on the GRCA board for 21 years and spent five years as chair of Conservation Ontario, where he was a champion of conservation on a provincial level.

Along with Krause, former Waterloo mayor Lynne Woolstencroft and former North Dumfries mayor Joe Martens have not been reappointed. Both were long-term GRCA board members who continued to serve on the board after they were no longer on council.

Vice-chair Alan Dale of Oxford County, who was reappointed to his position even though he lost his seat in the election, chaired the December board meeting. Only 19 of the 26 board members had been appointed for this meeting and some appointments had not yet been ratified.

At a special meeting on Jan. 12, the GRCA board members will be appointed to committees and will also elect new officers, including a new chair.

### **More power in the watershed**

The GRCA has been notified of environmental assessments for three proposed small wind farms and an

exploration of two different ways of increasing power for the City of Woodstock.

Schneider Power Inc. is preparing an environmental screening report of a small scale wind farm on agricultural land north of Arthur. The proposed wind farm is on 400 acres and will have five wind turbines, each generating about 1.5 MW of power.

Grand Valley Wind Farms Inc. is preparing an environmental assessment for two 10 MW wind farms in East Luther Grand Valley. Four to six wind power turbines are proposed for each site.

Hydro One is considering two different ways of providing additional power to Woodstock – upgrading an existing transmission line, or adding a new transmission line that would be tapped from an existing line. A portion of the study area is within the Grand River watershed in Norwich Township in wetland areas and as a result, the GRCA will provide input into this study.

### **Fees to increase**

The GRCA will increase plan review and permit fees by three per cent effective Jan. 1 2007.

GRCA staff have been working with the development industry over the past few years on preconsultation guidelines to help improve the quality of the technical documents and streamline planning applications with municipalities.

GRCA input to municipal plans and policies and review of planning amendments that are initiated by the municipality would continue to be provided without a fee increase, since these are included in the levy from



municipalities. The changes were discussed with several home builder associations with whom the GRCA will meet five times each year to improve the plan review process.

#### Review pre-1996 applications

GRCA staff will review subdivisions and greenfield applications that received approval before 1996, but have not yet been constructed.

Policies on floodplains, wetlands, bank erosion and stormwater management have been updated since 1988. Once this review is complete, GRCA staff will report back to the board on the natural resource and policy issues related to these applications.

By focusing on applications prior to 1996, the GRCA is reviewing applications that were approved before some of these policies came into effect.

#### Warm wet weather continues

The wet mild weather that continued during the first half of December has been good for groundwater recharge.

Precipitation was already close to or above average for the month in many parts of the watershed, according to December's monthly watershed report that was presented at the board meeting Dec. 15.

The mean air temperature was 1.8 degrees above the long-term average for December and in fact, 15 of the past 18 months have been warmer than normal.

The wet weather triggered runoff and stream flows were 150 to 200 per cent above the long-term average across the watershed. The reservoirs were above their normal operating range and Lake Erie's water level was slightly above the long-term average.

#### Northstar presentations

The GRCA heard two presentations on efforts by Northstar Aerospace in Cambridge to monitor and clean up trichloroethylene, a contaminant that is impacting the water and air.

Janet McKenzie, project manager for

Northstar, said that the company discovered the contaminant in the summer of 2005 and has been implementing a long-term remediation plan and has met with residents in the effected area to discuss the plan. The company is moving ahead with programs to remove the chemical, considered a likely carcinogen, from the groundwater. They have drilled a well in Dumfries Conservation Area to assist in their monitoring efforts.

Dolly Goyette, the district manager in the Guelph office of the Ministry of the Environment, said that 15 people, including a full-time project manager, have been working on this problem which is a high priority for their office.

The GRCA staff are working on a report that will come to the board on this issue.

#### New Headwaters Healthy Wetlands project

A new three-year program to conserve and enhance wetlands in the Middle and Upper Grand will provide up to 100 per cent funding for demonstration projects that protect, restore or enhance wetlands and wetland habitat.

Called the Headwaters Healthy Wetlands project, this program builds on the success of the Healthy Wetlands for the Upper Grand pilot project that ran for three years until 2005. It includes not only the Upper Grand, but also the Middle Grand (roughly from Guelph north) and the Upper Saugeen River watershed. The goal of the project is to promote the value and functions of wetlands. This will be accomplished through providing technical and financial assistance for wetland enhancement projects, offering workshops and tours and assisting municipalities and agencies to develop and implement policies that better protect existing wetlands.

Examples of projects that can receive full or partial funding under Headwaters Healthy Wetlands include small wetland restorations, buffer plantings, livestock exclusion fencing, alternative watering sources or any other innovative project that

illustrates benefits to wetlands and agriculture.

The GRCA is a partner in this project which is led by Ducks Unlimited Canada. For program details or to arrange a site visit, contact Robert Messier at (519) 621-2763 Ext. 310.

#### 10th Heritage Day workshop

The 10th annual Heritage Day Workshop and Celebration will be hosted by the City of Waterloo and the GRCA at the Waterloo Memorial Recreational Complex on national Heritage Day, Monday Feb. 19.

The theme for the day-long workshop is Explore Your Waterloo: Yesterday, Today and Beyond.

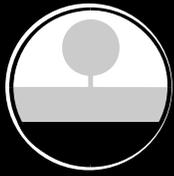
Waterloo has a rich history. It has grown from strong industrial roots in the 19th century to a progressive and highly innovative community in the twenty-first century.

To learn more about the city's evolution from its humble beginnings to one of the world's top seven intelligent communities, please register online after Dec. 19 at [www.city.waterloo.on.ca/HeritageDayWorkshop](http://www.city.waterloo.on.ca/HeritageDayWorkshop) or contact Peggie Bednarek by e-mail at [pbednarek@city.waterloo.on.ca](mailto:pbednarek@city.waterloo.on.ca), by fax at (519) 886-5788, or by phone at (519) 747-8643.

**This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in January 2007.**

**It is a summary of the December 2006 business conducted by the Planning & Operations; Administration, Finance & Personnel; and General Membership Committees. Space permitting, other noteworthy happenings and topics of interest have been included. The Grand River Conservation Authority welcomes the photocopying and distribution of "GRCA Minutes" or visit our website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)**





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**February 2007  
Volume 13 - No. 2**

## **GRCA General Membership**

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Alan Dale of Norwich elected new chair of GRCA

Alan Dale, a farmer from the Township of Norwich, has been elected chair of the GRCA.

Dale, who represents Oxford County on the 26-member board, was elected to a one-year term at a GRCA board meeting on Jan. 12. He moved up to the chairmanship after serving as first vice-chair for the past year.

Dale has been a member of the GRCA board since 2000. He is a former member of Norwich Township Council and has served on several township and Oxford County committees. Dale succeeds Peter Krause, who had been chair from 1998 until December 2006. Krause was not reappointed to the board by the Region of Waterloo, which he had represented since 1986. Dale paid credit to Krause who, he said, left some "big shoes to fill."

Jane Mitchell, a member of Waterloo Regional Council from the City of Waterloo, was elected first vice-chair. She has been a GRCA board member since 2003 and a regional councillor since 2000.

Vic Prendergast, a representative of the City of Brantford, was acclaimed to another term as second vice-chair. A GRCA board member for eight years, he has been second vice-chair for six years.

### **2007 park fees set by GRCA**

The price of daily admission to GRCA parks in 2007 will remain frozen at \$4 for those over 14, but it has increased by 25 cents to \$2.50 for those between six and 14.

Rates for season passes are frozen at

\$110 for a vehicle sticker. Walk-in but-ton passes also remain the same as last year, at \$45 for adults and \$30 for children.

Rates will increase by \$1 for nightly camping to \$27 for unserviced sites and \$32 for premium, waterfront and serviced sites.

For seasonal campers, rates will increase \$25 a season for an un-serviced site and \$50 a season for a serv-iced site. The rates vary, depending on the conservation area.

The GRCA operates 12 conservation areas which record more than one million visits a year. The parks operate on a break-even basis and are expected to generate \$5.5 million in revenue in 2007 in order to cover costs. A complete listing of fees is posted on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

### **New memorial grove**

William Kipp Funeral Home is working with the Grand River Conservation Foundation to create a "green legacy" of new trees on conser-vation lands in North and South Dumfries townships.

Kipp Funeral Home of Paris and Ayr will make a donation of \$25 for every funeral it holds, which should generate enough money to pay for about 100 trees each year, which will be planted on various properties owned by the GRCA in the two town-ships.

In addition, a memorial grove will be established at the FWR Dickson Wilderness Area on Brant-Waterloo Road, midway between Paris and Cambridge, in memory of those served by the funeral home.

Each year a tree will be planted in the grove at the wilderness area and a



special ceremony will be held for families served that year.

Dickson Wilderness Area occupies about 34 hectares (84 acres) in the Township of North Dumfries. Most of it is part of a rare prairie grassland ecosystem and has been left in its natural state. There are several kilometres of walking trails through the mixed forest, wetland and grassland.

#### Rowing Club lease

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The GRCA is negotiating a lease with the Guelph Rowing Club to allow the club to construct a boathouse on Guelph Lake.

The rowing club is a non-profit organization and needs a lease that is longer than the five-year term currently permitted under the Conservation Authorities Act so that it can secure funding contributions. The GRCA board gave the green light to staff to apply to the Ministry of Natural Resources for a longer lease.

GRCA staff has already been working closely with the club on the location of the building. The authority previously approved a permit for construction of the boathouse, ramps and docks.

#### Nature Centre business plan

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The Grand River Conservation Foundation will provide \$75,000 for a one-year pilot marketing program for the GRCA nature centres.

For the past five years the foundation has assisted the watershed's six school boards and the GRCA through the \$2.2 million Living Classroom – Campaign for Outdoor Education initiative. Funding through this program ends in June and a recently developed business plan will aim to keep all nature centres open for programming and keep the GRCA levy support at the current level of \$110,000. The marketing plan will come into effect this fall.

The GRCA operates five nature centres in the Grand River watershed. Each year, the centres provide environmental and outdoor education programs to over 50,000 children from school classes, community youth

organizations and family groups.

#### Land sale to Woolwich

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The GRCA is negotiating the sale of three acres (1.2 hectares) of land in Floradale to the Township of Woolwich.

The township plans to use the land for a new fire hall and the sale will be based on the appraised value. The land is currently leased for agricultural purposes. It was acquired to create a reservoir, but is no longer needed by the GRCA.

#### Purchase at Dunnville Marsh

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The GRCA plans to purchase 126 acres (51 hectares) of provincially significant wetland near Dunnville, sharing the cost with Ducks Unlimited.

The GRCA already owns 824 acres (333 hectares) at the Dunnville Marsh and the new purchase will expand these holdings. An environmental assessment of the land, currently owned by Mosaic Esterhazy Holdings, has been completed. Watershed restoration staff is working on many projects at the Dunnville Marsh and returning agricultural fields to wetland habitat.

The land is expected to cost the GRCA approximately \$52,500, with funds to come from the land acquisition fund.

#### Warm weather

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The real weather-maker has been above-average temperatures, with no snow until mid-January.

Temperatures at the Shand Dam were 4.6 degrees above the long-term average for January, and the past two months were the warmest recorded since 1939. Typically ice forms on the river in early December, but due to the warm conditions, there was no ice cover until the end of January.

Precipitation has generally been above average across the watershed, ranging from 79 to 133 per cent of the long-term average. Streamflows average 80 per cent above the long-term average due to the rain and snowmelt, but the reservoir levels are within the

normal operating range.

#### Conservation grants awarded

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Five organizations and four schools are to receive 2006 community conservation grants.

The Grand River Conservation Foundation awards grants to qualified community groups and elementary schools that are undertaking conservation projects.

Grants of \$1,000 have been awarded to Friends of the Grand River in Fergus, OPIRG at the University of Guelph and the Guelph Field Naturalists, while Big Brothers and Sisters of Brantford received \$1,890 and Langs Farm Village of Cambridge received \$2,000.

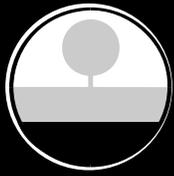
The four schools selected to receive \$500 are Rainham Central in Fisherville, Mount Pleasant near Brantford, Victoria Terrace in Fergus and Our Lady of Fatima in Cambridge.

Funds from these grants come from the GRCA's Thies Riverprize Endowment Fund and the Grand Champions Endowment Fund, established through private donations to the GRCA.

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## March 2007 Volume 13 – No. 3

### GRCA General Membership

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GRCA approves 2007 budget of \$23.7 million

The general membership of the GRCA unanimously approved a 2007 budget calling for expenditures of \$23.7 million at the February AGM.

That represents an increase of just 2.6 per cent over the 2006 budget. For the 925,000 residents of the Grand River watershed, their average contribution amounts to \$8.19 per year, compared to \$7.66 in 2006.

The money will go to prevent flooding, improve water quality, protect water supplies, provide environmental education, operate conservation areas and trails, and manage other sensitive environmental lands.

The budget also includes \$1.3 million for research and studies of water quality and water supply issues to be used to develop source protection plans under the Clean Water Act. The provincial government is financing all of the plan development work and the money covers work being done by the GRCA and three partner conservation authorities: Long Point Region, Catfish Creek and Kettle Creek.

The bulk of the GRCA's revenue comes from three sources: municipal levies, provincial grants and self-generated funds.

The municipal share amounts to \$8.4 million, about 36 per cent of revenues. The share paid by each municipality is based on assessment.

The majority of the GRCA's revenue – about \$11.8 million, or 50 per cent – comes from self-generated revenues, which includes park admissions, property rentals, hydroelectricity sales, gravel sales, land rental and grants from the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

Unusual weather means high risk of flooding

The combination of a long wet fall followed by an extended deep freeze means there is a high risk of flooding in the Grand River watershed this spring.

Last fall was the fourth wettest since the GRCA started keeping records in 1939 and it left the ground saturated. When cold weather hit in mid-January, the ground froze solid. If it is still frozen when the spring melt occurs, most water will run off the surface into rivers and streams and this could set the stage for a major flood.

A report to flood managers in February noted that some of the most severe floods in the Grand River watershed, including the 1974 flood, occurred when heavy rains fell on saturated ground.

There is also a high potential for flooding from ice jams this year. The majority of the Grand River and its major tributaries are ice covered, with the exception of areas downstream of major sewage treatment plants, major dams or where there is significant groundwater discharge.

If necessary, an ice breaker could be brought in to break up a jam at the mouth of the Grand River.

Ice safety bulletin issued

The long cold snap has left many rivers and streams in the Grand River watershed covered with ice, but they can be deceptively dangerous.

The thickness of ice can vary greatly when it covers moving water. The ice can erode from underneath, resulting in big changes in thickness within



short distances.

In addition, water entering a river from a groundwater spring, storm sewer drain or other source can be warmer than the rest of the water in the river, creating spots of open water or thin ice.

The water in most of the Grand River system is 1 C or less. Anyone going into the water could fall victim to hypothermia within minutes, losing feeling in arms and legs and then becoming unconscious.

Flows in many parts of the river are higher than usual for this time of year, which could complicate rescue efforts.

### Moffat Creek sewer assessment

The GRCA board heard a presentation from Angelique Mohring, a representative of Moffat Creek Advocates, a group who oppose the one-kilometre Moffat Creek trunk sanitary sewer extension in Cambridge. She asked the GRCA to find the project unacceptable and to urge the City of Cambridge to find another route for the sewage pipe.

This project would extend the existing sanitary pipe through the Moffat Creek valley to Dundas Street in order to serve new development in south-east Galt. It would also create a multi-use recreational trail. The environmental assessment was originally filed in 1999 and since the work didn't start within five years, Cambridge conducted a review. Cambridge city council supported the environmental assessment addendum on Feb. 5 and a 30-day period for comments followed.

The GRCA will ask the City of Cambridge to extend the 30-day comment period so that a representative from the city can come to the GRCA board to discuss the project.

### Goose poop problems

The GRCA's eight swimming areas were posted on more days in 2006 due to poor water quality than during the previous five years, leading to some disappointed swimmers.

Swimming areas were posted 221 days in 2006; 131 days in 2005; 70 days

in 2004; 58 days in 2003; 135 days in 2002.

The result has been decreased revenue to the conservation areas, which are self-supporting. A staff committee made several suggestions that focus primarily on the increasing number of geese that have an adverse impact on water quality. The committee recommended more emphasis on disturbing the goose eggs early in the spring to reduce the number of new birds. Parks staff will also try to reduce manicured grass in beach areas and use fencing to minimize access to the water.

The committee does not recommend transferring geese to locations such as Luther Marsh, but suggest experimenting with new methods of goose control. These include hiring a canine company or installing a flashing light system to scare the geese and installing baiting stations to attract geese away from the main beach area.

Circulating pumps which originally improved water quality through water movement now appear to stir up existing contaminants and will be removed from beaches. More extensive water testing in some areas will be undertaken if possible in order to identify sources of water quality problems.

### First phase of Dundas Valley study

AquaResource Inc. will be hired for \$104,000 to carry out the first phase of the Dundas Valley Geological Feature study.

The GRCA is co-operating with the Ontario Geological Survey on this \$770,000 three-year study that has four phases of investigation. The GRCA is making in-kind contributions of \$109,000.

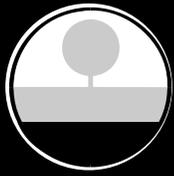
The study will increase the understanding of the geology of the southern portion of the watershed and provide valuable targets for municipal water supply exploration in Paris, Cambridge and Waterloo. Scientists are hunting for an ancient riverbed, buried deep below the surface of the Grand River watershed, which might someday become a significant source

of drinking water. Some study has been done of the buried riverbed in the Dundas Valley area, but there is little knowledge of its features in other locations.

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**April 2007**  
**Volume 13 - No. 4**

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### **Cottage building moratorium lifted**

The GRCA board approved interim guidelines governing construction and renovations on cottage lots, lifting the building moratorium.

The GRCA leases land at Lake Belwood and Conestogo Lake to 733 cottage owners who are permitted to use the cottages on a seasonal basis. Cottage lot tenants require the approval of the GRCA before erecting any building or structure, or making an alteration to a cottage.

The moratorium on building was in place since July 2006 so that concerns about the impact of cottages on water quality and other issues can be addressed. The interim guidelines will restrict the overall size of the expanded or new cottage to a total footprint of 366 square metres (1,200 sq. ft.), not including decks. No two storey buildings are allowed and the GRCA encourages environmentally friendly and sustainable building material and design.

Staff will consult with members of the two cottage associations to bring back a final set of building guidelines before July 2008.

### **Flood warnings issued**

The Flood Operations Centre was active during March.

It issued five flood messages and two watershed conditions bulletins. Advisories were issued for the Nith River for the communities of New Hamburg and Ayr. A flood warning termination message was sent March 26.

Precipitation in March was below the long-term average across the

watershed, at a low of 58 per cent of the long-term average at the Shand Dam and a high of 92 per cent at Guelph Dam. The temperature at Shand Dam was 0.4 degrees above the long-term average, so that by the end of March, the snow pack had generally melted. Only a small amount remained in some bush areas and fence rows in northern areas.

Most of the ice in the watercourses had melted by the end of the month. Gradual warming in early March allowed the ice to erode and breakup occurred with ice jam-related flooding affecting Grand Valley briefly on March 22 and through Conway Trailer Park in Cayuga around March 16.

The GRCA's large reservoirs are in their normal operating range for this time of year, while smaller reservoirs are at their April level ahead of schedule because of the early snowmelt.

The flood risk from spring rainfall is still high due to the saturated ground.

### **Icebreaker visits the Grand**

For the third time in a dozen years, an icebreaker was called to the mouth of the Grand River in mid-March.

At 71 metres long (234 feet), the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker Griffon made three passes at the mouth of the Grand to break up 12-cm (five-inch) thick ice at the river mouth to prevent an ice jam that could cause flooding.

A U.S. icebreaker did the job in 2003 and the Griffon's last visit was in 1994. The conservation authority requests an icebreaker from the Canadian Coast Guard only when it is necessary.



Shand to generate electricity in 2008

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The GRCA has authorized staff to call for tenders to supply and install the equipment required to return the Shand Dam hydro plant back into service.

The hydro plant was shut down last July due to mechanical failure. It was designed to produce 690 kW of energy, but a persistent vibration problem meant its production was typically limited to 625 kW.

The Shand Dam was constructed in 1942 at Belwood Lake and the hydro plant went into service in 1987. The dam needs a new valve, turbine and generator. The GRCA expects to award a contract in June and have the new equipment installed during the rest of the year, bringing the hydro plant back into service next spring.

#### Green energy at nature centres

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The GRCA is continuing on the road to educating people about sustainability by featuring solar and wind energy at two nature centres.

Apps' Mill Nature Centre near Brantford launched a green energy project last fall, while a similar project is being launched at the Taquanyah Nature Centre near Cayuga in April.

A wind turbine and a bank of solar panels generate electricity that is stored in batteries and used to power several electrical devices in each of the nature centres. The equipment has monitoring devices that can be observed by students visiting the centres. The generating systems at each nature centre will produce enough power at full capacity to run about seven 100-watt light bulbs for 24-hours a day.

S. C. Johnson and Son Limited of Brantford contributed \$25,000 to the project at Apps' Mill Nature Centre, while Ontario Power Generation donated funds and in-kind contributions for the Taquanyah Nature Centre project. The Ontario Ministry of Energy's community conservation initiatives program provided \$21,500 to complete the structures on both sites, add interpretive signs and for

curriculum development.

Thousands of students visit these nature centres each year for curriculum-based outdoor programs and the green energy projects will help educate them about the environment and energy conservation.

#### Water budget contract awarded

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AquaResource Inc. will be hired for an estimated \$177,000 to complete the water budget and water quantity stress assessment of Long Point Region, Catfish Creek and Kettle Creek conservation authorities.

A water budget is an important planning tool, since it quantifies water resources across the watershed. The GRCA is overseeing this contract because it is the lead conservation authority in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region and is working with the three others to develop a joint source protection plan. The GRCA's water budget, which quantifies water resources across the watershed is already complete.

AquaResource is expected to complete the stress assessment by October 2007. The contract and administrative costs will be covered by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

#### GRCA board turns down Moffat Creek motion

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The GRCA board voted 20 to five to turn down a motion to urge the City of Cambridge to look at other alternatives for the Moffat Creek sanitary sewer extension.

A lengthy discussion took place following presentations from Cambridge Mayor Doug Craig, planning commissioner Janet Babcock, Al Allendorf of Greengate Village Ltd. and Les Kadar representing Moffat Creek Advocates, a citizen's group opposed to the project.

The sewer extension and multi-use recreational trail will extend the existing Moffat Creek sanitary pipe between Franklin Boulevard and Dundas Street to serve new development planned for southeast Galt.

The environmental assessment for

the project was originally filed in 1999 and since the work didn't start within five years, Cambridge conducted a review. The project had been unanimously endorsed by Cambridge city council.

#### Environmental scholarship deadline May 31

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Applications are being accepted until May 31 for the S.C. Johnson Environmental Scholarship.

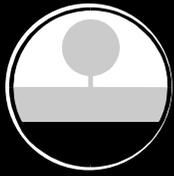
This \$1,500 scholarship is open to full-time students who have completed the third year or sixth semester of an honours program in a watershed university, or the second year engineering at Conestoga College.

For further information and an application form, visit the Grand River Conservation Foundation section of the website at [www.grandriver.ca/foundation](http://www.grandriver.ca/foundation) or contact the GRCF at (519) 621-2763 ext. 271.

**This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in April 2007.**

**It is a summary of the March 2007 business conducted by the Planning & Operations; Administration, Finance & Personnel; and General Membership Committees. Space permitting, other noteworthy happenings and topics of interest have been included. The Grand River Conservation Authority welcomes the photocopying and distribution of "GRCA Minutes" or visit our website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)**





# GRCA Minutes

Grand River Conservation Authority, 400 Clyde Road, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 5W6  
Tel: (519) 621-2761 Fax: (519) 621-4844 Internet: [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)

May 2007  
Volume 13 – No. 5

## GRCA General Membership

**Chairman** - Alan Dale

**1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell

**2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast

**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills

**Townships of Mapleton and Wellington North** - Pat Salter

**Township of Centre Wellington** - Shawn Watters

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**City of Brantford** - Robert Hillier, Vic Prendergast

**Haldimand and Norfolk Counties** - Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

### Clean Water Act newsletter

A new e-newsletter and website to provide residents of the Grand River watershed with information about the new Ontario Clean Water Act and drinking water source protection has been launched.

The first edition of the electronic newsletter is available on the website [www.sourcewater.ca](http://www.sourcewater.ca) in the "What's New" section.

The newsletter will report on the work being done to protect the sources of municipal drinking water in the four conservation authority areas. Information on how to subscribe to the newsletter is available on the website.

### First clean water regulations

The steps necessary to create a source protection committee outlined in the new Clean Water Act have been posted and are available for public comment until May 12.

The Clean Water Act was passed in October 2006 and establishes a system for protecting the sources of municipal drinking water, including municipal wells and surface water intakes in rivers and lakes. It calls for development of a drinking water source protection plan in each watershed in Ontario and outlines the steps needed to protect drinking water sources from becoming contaminated.

The source protection committee will be made up of representatives of municipalities, farmers, businesses, landowners and others. The draft version of regulations which outline creation of this committee are posted on the website of the Environmental Registry at [www.ebr.gov.on.ca](http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca).

### Visitors from Argentina

Three visitors from Argentina came to the Grand River watershed in April to get a first-hand glimpse of water management GRCA-style.

The visitors included the mayor and the director of public works for Malargue in Mendoza province, who toured along with Andres Hamilton Joseph, the head of Los Algarrobos, a non-profit environmental organization. Hamilton first visited the GRCA in 1989.

During a presentation to the GRCA board, Raul Rodreguez, the mayor of Malargue, said that he intends to adopt some of the programs he has learned about during his visit, including water conservation initiatives.

A twinning program between the GRCA and the San Roque watershed has been underway for two-and-a-half years and is funded primarily through a \$50,000 grant from the International River Foundation in Australia.

### Land purchase

The GRCA will purchase 39 hectares (96 acres) of floodplain and valley known as the Greenfield Swamp, located in Ayr in North Dumfries Township.

The two parcels of land are both along the Nith River. The GRCA will consult with township staff to develop a stewardship plan for the property.

The owner of the property received a certificate of appreciation from the GRCA in 1991 for planting trees on the land.

### Waste removal tender

Waste Management of Canada Corporation has won the tender for



garbage and recycling at Belwood and Conestogo Lakes for the next three years.

This company has been providing this service in recent years at both lakes.

### **Warm wet April**

---

A delayed spring and wet soil conditions mean the weather will be monitored closely during May.

Precipitation in April was at or above the long-term average across much of the watershed. Monthly average air temperatures at Shand Dam were below the long-term average, with a mean temperature 2.4 degrees below average as of April 25.

River flows were expected to remain above normal into early May because cool weather in April delayed the recession of spring flows due to slower evaporation. Reservoir levels at the five larger reservoirs were in the normal operating range, but the smaller reservoirs (Laurel Creek and Shade's Mills) were taken up to their May levels slightly ahead of schedule.

### **New plan for Luther Marsh**

---

A public open house was held in April to display the proposed new management plan for Luther Marsh Wilderness Area.

This is the first new management plan for the 5,900-hectare (14,600-acre) Luther Marsh area since 1991. It provides an overview of the current condition of the property and proposes a management strategy to cover its use for the next 10 years.

The land is owned by the GRCA and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

The 1,800-hectare (4,500-acre) Luther Reservoir was created in 1952 by the construction of Luther Dam, which blocked Black Creek. Since then, the reservoir and its surrounding wetlands have become an important natural area, offering a habitat to many species of animals, plants and birds.

The goals of the 2007-2016 management plan include protecting the provincially significant wetlands and

other significant features and species; optimizing habitat diversity and wildlife production; accommodating compatible human uses that do not impair significant features; and providing low flow augmentation to the Grand River. Copies of the plan are available on the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

### **Prescribed burns in April**

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The GRCA carried out three prescribed burns in April.

Two were on islands located within the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area and a third was in the Dickson Wilderness Area, south of Cambridge.

The prescribed burns help to reduce the amount of woody vegetation and provide habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and other grassland species.

The GRCA coordinated the prescribed burns that were conducted by the Prescribed Burn Unit from Lands & Forests Consulting. The company strictly follows the intensive Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources guidelines for prescribed burning to ensure safety and effectiveness.

### **GRCA parks open for 2007 season**

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Ten conservation areas operated by the GRCA opened for business at noon on Friday, April 27 to catch the start of the trout fishing season.

The Elora Quarry Conservation Area will open in June. Eight of the GRCA parks offer camping, making the Grand River parks the second largest campground operation in the province — second only to Ontario Parks — with more than 2,500 campsites.

The GRCA will continue the policy of a season-long alcohol ban at the Elora Gorge Conservation Area. There will also be an extended spring ban at two parks: Guelph Lake Conservation Area and Byng Island Conservation Area from May 17 to June 24. In all other parks, the usual alcohol bans during the Victoria Day weekend and Labour Day weekend will continue.

Though the summer of 2006 was wetter than recent seasons, the GRCA's parks still recorded more than 1.1 million paid visits, including campers and day-use visitors, producing revenue of close to \$5.4 million. GRCA parks are operated to break even, with revenues covering all operating and capital costs.

### **New committee structure**

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The GRCA has changed its committee structure effective May 1, permanently adopting a structure that has been used on a trial basis since February.

Previously, the Planning and Operations Committee met on the second Tuesday morning of the month while the Administration, Finance and Personnel Committee met in the afternoon. These two committees have been eliminated and replaced with the Committee of the Whole. It is expected that this arrangement will provide greater involvement of all board members in decision-making.

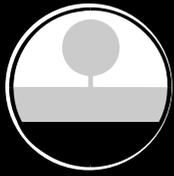
Another change in policy is that the chair and vice-chairs will be eligible for re-election to the same office for up to a maximum of five consecutive one-year terms, where previously there was no limit.

Several small housekeeping items were also changed to update the bylaw of the organization.

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# GRCA Minutes

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**June 2007**  
**Volume 13 – No. 6**

## **GRCA** **General Membership**

**Chairman** - Alan Dale

**1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell

**2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast

**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills

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**Haldimand and Norfolk Counties** - Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

### **GRCA seeking chair of Source Protection Committee**

The GRCA is seeking expressions of interest from people who would like to become chair of the proposed Source Protection Committee for the proposed Lake Erie Source Protection Region.

The chair would lead a committee that would guide the development of Source Protection Plans for the Grand River watershed and three other watersheds in the Lake Erie Region. The work would be done under the Clean Water Act, which was passed by the legislature in October. The GRCA is compiling a list of persons who would be interested in serving as chair should the Act and anticipated regulations come into force.

Information on the formation of the committee is in regulations being developed by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Draft versions of the regulations are posted on the Environmental Registry under the Environmental Bill of Rights.

More information on the position of chair, the Clean Water Act and drinking water source protection is available at [www.sourcewater.ca](http://www.sourcewater.ca)

### **Funding for Luther Marsh forests**

Ontario Power Generation Inc. is providing funds to plant 136,320 trees on 152 hectares of land at Luther Marsh between 2007 and 2010.

This funding was announced by Steve Hounsell, Senior Advisor, Sustainable Development with OPG at the May GRCA board meeting. The funding supports forest restoration which is part of the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area. The funding is from OPG's Carbon Sequestration and Biodiversity

Management program.

Already OPG has contributed funds to restore 70 hectares at Luther Marsh. The reforestation will result in an incremental annual reduction in the GRCA's income of \$3,750, since rented agricultural lands are being restored.

### **Groff Mill Creek flood solution**

The City of Cambridge is working to resolve flooding problems along Groff Mill Creek.

Recent storms, including one last September, resulted in flooding of Coronation Boulevard and erosion downstream. The City of Cambridge initiated a stormwater management study through the environmental assessment process. The preferred alternative includes installing a berm upstream of the CN rail crossing of Groff Mill Creek within Dumfries Conservation Area, as well as channel improvements to the creek and trail realignment over the berm.

This solution replaces an earlier proposal to put a stormwater management pond in the park.

### **Uneventful spring weather**

Rainfall in May was well below normal, averaging 42 per cent (at Conestogo Dam) to 75 per cent (at Guelph Dam) up to May 23.

Temperatures have also been slightly below normal, breaking a warm weather trend over 19 of the past 23 months.

Water levels in the large reservoirs are below the normal high water levels for late May, however the reservoirs are holding enough water to add to the river over the summer months.

The reduced river flows and dry



conditions mean that hydro production at Conestogo and Guelph dams may be lower than normal and recreational activities on the reservoirs may also be affected.

### Safety improvements at Conestogo Dam

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Final design work will be initiated to upgrade the stilling basin at Conestogo Dam.

Alterations to the stilling basin, which is below the dam, are required in order to safely pass extreme flows.

The improvements to the stilling basin are expected to cost \$2.8 million. It is anticipated that half the cost would be covered by the province. The project will be carried out over two years, with initial construction starting in the fall of 2008.

### Summer tubing at Chicopee

---

An agreement between the GRCA, the Chicopee Ski Club and the Valley Group will be changed to allow a tube park to operate during the summer.

The GRCA owns the land and the Valley Group operates the tube park under an agreement with the GRCA and the ski club. The new tube park could be operating later this summer, and will help ensure the business is viable year-round, especially during warm winters.

The ski club land is leased from the GRCA for 20 years until 2017, and a five-year financial agreement that is part of this lease is set to be renegotiated by the end of July.

### Upper Grand restoration

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The GRCA has budgeted \$50,000 to extend the Rural Water Quality Program and help landowners in the Upper Grand with watershed restoration.

After consulting with agricultural groups, five types of projects have been selected for this program: clean water diversion, livestock access restriction, erosion control structures, tree planting and wellhead abandonment.

Agricultural group representatives

will help review the funding applications.

### Plans aloft for green roof at Laurel Creek Nature Centre

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The Laurel Creek Nature Centre in northwest Waterloo is nearly 30 years old and in need of a new roof.

As part of the overall roof replacement, a 204-square-metre (2,200 sq. ft.) green roof will be added at the front of the nature centre to provide a new dimension of environmental learning.

A green roof incorporates living material – such as grasses and flowers – that help clean the air and provide wildlife habitat. The roof's features will include thermometers, rain barrels and an observation tower so students can see this new technology firsthand. The green roof will help the 10,000 students who visit annually develop a lifelong respect for the natural world.

The \$250,000 project includes a 5,000 sq. ft. black roof, the green roof, associated learning tools for experiments and support costs. Most of the funding will come from a Grand River Conservation Foundation campaign led by Ian Murdoch, a director on the board and a minimum of \$10,000 will come from the GRCA.

### GRCA environmental awards nominees sought

---

The GRCA is looking for nominees for its 2007 environmental awards.

Each year the GRCA presents awards to individuals, families, organizations and businesses that have taken action to protect and enhance the natural environment of the Grand River watershed.

It presents two types of awards: the Honour Roll Award for a sustained record of achievement over an extended period of time; and Watershed Awards for outstanding examples of conservation and environmental work.

Nominations can come from anyone in the watershed. The deadline for nominations is June 30. A nomination form is available from the GRCA web-

site at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca). Look for the "Watershed Awards" link on the home page in the "Taking Action" section.

The winners are selected by the Special Recognition Committee of the GRCA board, and they will be honoured at a special event this fall.

### Global realities, local solutions at seventh Water Forum

---

Water issues will be examined from every angle at the seventh annual Grand River Watershed Water Forum in Cambridge on Friday, Sept. 14.

Tickets are now available for the forum, which has the theme "Water: Global Realities – Local Solutions." It includes presentations and panel discussions looking at water issues and innovative solutions for tackling them. Gilles Leclerc, director general space technologies branch of the Canadian Space Agency and George Roter, co-CEO of Engineers Without Borders are two of the keynote speakers.

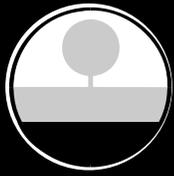
The forum will be held on the grounds of the GRCA at 400 Clyde Road, Cambridge from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

More information on registration, exhibit space and sponsorships is available on the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) under the heading "Conferences: 2007 Water Forum."

### This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in June 2007.

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# GRCA Minutes

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**July 2007  
Volume 13 - No. 7**

## **GRCA General Membership**

- Chairman** - Alan Dale
- 1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell
- 2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast
- Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills
- Townships of Mapleton and Wellington North** - Pat Salter
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Guelph Lake Nature Centre celebrates 25 years and 250,000 kids

A celebration of the Guelph Lake Nature Centre's 25th anniversary took place June 29 and included visits by dignitaries and former students as well as a plaque unveiling.

Since it first opened in 1982, the Guelph Lake Nature Centre has provided hands-on environmental outdoor education programs to more than 250,000 students from schools in Guelph and Wellington County.

On hand for the celebration were MPPs Liz Sandals and Ted Arnott, directors of education Martha Rogers from the Upper Grand District School Board and Don Drone from the Wellington Catholic District School Board, plus representatives of Wellington County, Guelph/Eramosa Township and the City of Guelph.

An overview of the accomplishments of the nature centre was presented by resource interpreter Dan Schneider, followed by reminiscences by former student Todd Fritzley, who now works for the GRCA.

A plaque unveiling, barbeque and tour of the centre followed the ceremony.

### Guelph Rowing Club building

The design and new location for a permanent Guelph Rowing Club storage facility at Guelph Lake Conservation Area was presented to the GRCA board, which approved a new lease.

Club president Walter Kehm told the board he anticipates construction will begin after Labour Day and will take about two months. He said the club has \$250,000 in grants and loans

lined up to cover the cost of the project. The eight-year-old rowing club will relocate from the current site beside the Guelph Community Boating Club to a new spot not far from the Guelph Lake Nature Centre.

The new facility will accommodate the rowing club's 80 boats and the club is also preparing to host some major events starting with the masters rowing championship in 2008.

### Terrestrial resources has successful year

The terrestrial resources department presented a 2006 annual report to the board, saying 2006 was a success during which monitoring and restoration of natural areas increased.

During the year, 14.2 hectares of agricultural land at Dunnville Marsh was restored. An update of the Luther Marsh Management Plan began and mapping of the farm land at Luther Marsh was updated using GPS equipment.

The department verified and assessed the status of species and communities at risk on GRCA lands, including Luther Marsh, Dunnville Marsh, and the Cambridge to Paris area. It held prescribed burns at Brant Conservation Area and near Paris.

### Warm, dry June

Rainfall in many parts of the watershed was only one-third of the average of 80 millimetres during June.

It ranged from a low of 19 per cent at Shand Dam to a high of 41 per cent at Shade's Mills.

The air temperature at Shand Dam was 1.7 degrees above the long-term average, following a warm May and cool April.



What was unusual this June was that the high temperature was coupled with very dry air, leading to conditions that dried out the landscape.

River flows continued to decline until mid-June, when warm dry weather resulted in a sharp drop, pushing some streams into low flow conditions. River flow was augmented so that 70 per cent of the flow on the Grand River at Kitchener-Doon came from the reservoirs, while on the Speed River at Edinburgh Road in Guelph about 40 per cent of the flow was supplied from reservoir storage.

Reservoir levels at the three largest reservoirs (Belwood Lake, Conestogo Lake and Guelph Lake) are lower than usual for this time of year, but other reservoirs are within their normal operating range.

#### Water conservation urged in Grand River watershed

Water users in the Grand River watershed were asked June 27 to cut their consumption by 10 per cent because of low river flows, caused by below normal precipitation.

The request came from the Low Water Response Team which is made up of representatives of municipalities, water users, Six Nations, the provincial agriculture, environment and natural resources ministries, and the GRCA. The team implements the Ontario Low Water Response Plan in the Grand River watershed.

Rainfall was less than 50 per cent of the long term average for June, and over the past three months was less than 80 per cent of the watershed average.

Also, individual municipalities started to implement their own water use restrictions.

#### EcoSchool certification for Laurel Creek Nature Centre

Ontario EcoSchools certification was awarded to Laurel Creek Nature Centre in Waterloo in June.

The EcoSchools program was designed to encourage educational facilities to be environmentally friendly. To qualify for this provincial certi-

fication, the nature centre conducted audits of waste produced and energy consumed and developed a plan to improve these areas. A scoring system out of 100 is used to evaluate the sites based on the four main pillars of the program - energy conservation, waste minimization, providing an environmentally-friendly curriculum and school ground greening.

The Laurel Creek Outdoor Education Centre is one of five GRCA nature centres. Staff at the nature centre encourages students to put simple yet effective actions into practice, such as ensuring lights and computers are turned off when not in use and reusing, recycling or composting materials.

Laurel Creek Nature Centre's grounds include a stream, a pond and Carolinian and prairie communities. Initiatives such as planting an arboretum and the plans for a green roof demonstrate the commitment by the GRCA to increase environmental awareness through ongoing initiatives.

#### Dam safety program

Over the past several years, the GRCA has been installing safety features at all GRCA-owned dams.

Warning signs and fencing have been erected at all dam sites and buoys and booms mark several of the most hazardous dams in the watershed. The GRCA has recently extended the program to proactively increase community awareness.

This included printing 50,000 copies of a children's river safety booklet titled, "The Kid's Guide to Playing it Safe, Playing it Cool", which was handed out to Grade 4 to 6 students through their schools in June. The booklets are also available at conservation areas and nature centres, as well as at special events.

New portage and dam information is included in the new book, "Paddling the Grand River." The GRCA has identified locations for portages at all the dam sites approved under the Navigable Waters Protection Act.

Each portage exit will have a sign noting the danger of the dam ahead and the distance to the portage, as well as indicating which bank to exit the river. Entrances will also be marked.

The signs are being designed this summer and are expected to be installed in the fall.

#### Foundation changes

All 20 members of the Grand River Conservation Foundation board have been reappointed for a year until next June.

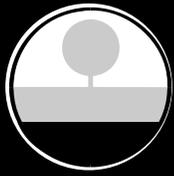
Over the next year the foundation's governance practices will be reviewed and a framework for staggered terms of service for board members will be developed. The foundation's 2006 Annual Report was released at the annual general meeting in June and it is available on the website [www.grandriver.ca/foundation](http://www.grandriver.ca/foundation).

During 2006 the foundation received \$540,000 from corporations (45 per cent), individuals (24 per cent) organizations (20 per cent) and foundations (11 per cent). It provided \$600,000 to GRCA projects during the year, including the final year of the five-year Living Classroom - Campaign for Outdoor Education.

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# GRCA Minutes

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**August 2007  
Volume 13 – No. 8**

## **GRCA General Membership**

**Chairman** - Alan Dale

**1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell

**2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast

**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills

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**Haldimand and Norfolk Counties** - Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

## **Farmland to forest at Guelph Lake**

Forty hectares of GRCA-owned farmland near Guelph Lake reservoir will slowly be transformed into a forest by 2020.

The future forest is next to Kiera's Forest, a restoration project north of the Guelph Lake Nature Centre. It will link existing forests and wetlands along the Speed River and increase the size and connectivity of the natural heritage system. This will make it more resilient to changing weather patterns and other stresses, because disconnected habitat has less biodiversity and doesn't allow plants and animals to migrate to other locations if necessary.

About three hectares a year will be taken out of agricultural production. Plantings will be done by students and other groups, and support from the community will be sought. The project is expected to cost \$10,000 to \$15,000 each year and the GRCA hopes to cover the costs with financial assistance from a donor.

The site will be ideal for an annual environmental fair similar to Sunoco Earth Day in Waterloo. The environmental fair would also cost \$10,000 to \$15,000 annually and would proceed only with financial help from an external funder.

## **Comment sought on policies to protect natural areas**

The GRCA is seeking public comment on new policies that will help protect natural areas such as wetlands, flood plains, slopes and the Lake Erie shoreline.

Building and construction activities in these areas are controlled by a

provincial regulation which came into effect in May 2006. The new policy statement from the GRCA explains in more detail how the GRCA will implement the regulation in the Grand River watershed. It spells out where construction or other activity would be prohibited and where it might be allowed. The policies will be used by GRCA staff to assess applications for permits in regulated areas.

The document is called, "GRCA Draft Policies for the Administration of Ontario Regulation 150/06 – Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation" and is available on the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

The deadline for comments is Sept. 30 and these should be sent to Barbara Veale, co-ordinator of policy, planning and partnerships by e-mail to [bveale@grandriver.ca](mailto:bveale@grandriver.ca), or by mail to the GRCA.

## **Watershed award recipients selected for 2007**

The recipients of the 2007 Watershed Awards will be recognized at the River Run Centre in Guelph in October.

Betty Schneider of Kitchener will receive the Honour Roll Award for her lifetime devotion to local conservation. She joined the original GRCA board in 1966 and was the first female member, serving on the executive committee for five years. She presided over the first meetings of the Grand River Conservation Foundation in 1970 and the Grand Valley Trails Association in 1972, becoming the founding president of both organizations.

There are also four watershed



award recipients: the Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph (for stewardship of environmental lands), Capital Paving and Dufferin Aggregates (joint award for participation in Mill Creek projects), Dennis Wendland of Kitchener (for his career as an outdoor educator) and Joe Kral of Guelph (for bird box installation at Guelph Lake).

Cut water use by 20 per cent in Whitemans Creek

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Water users in the Whitemans Creek watershed in Brant and Oxford counties are being asked to reduce their consumption by 20 per cent because of dry conditions in the area.

The request comes after an extended dry spell which has seen water levels in the creek drop to less than half of the average summer flow. The GRCA's Burford rain gauge has recorded only 81 millimetres of rain in the past three months, compared to the average of about 230 mm.

Whitemans Creek and the other streams in its watershed, Horner and Kenny creeks, are major sources of water for farm irrigation in an area known for its tobacco, ginseng, fruit and vegetables.

The request comes from the Grand River Low Water Response Team which decided to declare the Whitemans, Horner and Kenny creeks to be in a Level 2 condition. The team is made up of representatives of major water users including municipalities, farmers, golf course operators, gravel pit businesses, Six Nations and others.

Under the Ontario Low Water Response Plan, a river or stream is in a Level 2 condition when flows sink to less than 50 per cent of normal. That triggers the request for a voluntary reduction in water use of 20 per cent.

July drier than usual

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July was drier than average across most of the watershed.

Rainfall was lowest at Laurel Reservoir in Waterloo, where less than half the normal amount of rain fell. But at Luther Marsh in the north end, 179 per cent of the average rain fell, partly as a result of a local storm that

dumped 85 mm of rain in less than three hours.

The Low Water Response Team declared the entire Grand River watershed in Level 1 under the Ontario Low Water Response program, based on the less than 80 per cent of normal precipitation over the past three months and rapidly receding stream flows.

The weather was not as hot as usual in July with the temperature at Shand Dam 1.2 degrees below normal. Air masses have been dry, resulting in less humidity, so moisture has been drawn off the landscape.

Source Protection Committee selection now underway

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Several regulations to implement the Clean Water Act were made public in early July.

The search for volunteers who will be part of a Source Protection Committee for the Lake Erie Source Protection Region, which includes the Grand River watershed, is underway. The committee will be made up of a chair and 21 representatives of municipalities, businesses, industry, farmers, residents and others. There will also be a total of three additional seats available for representatives of Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the New Credit.

The committee will develop a plan to protect the sources of drinking water in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region, which includes the areas of the Grand River Conservation Authority, Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority and Kettle Creek Conservation Authority.

Committee members will be appointed this fall and begin work in the winter on the project that is expected to take about five years to complete. The application period for a chair for the committee closed July 4 and a short list of candidates will be presented to Environment Minister Laurel Broten, who will appoint the successful candidate.

The first meeting of the Grand River Source Protection Authority took

place July 27. The authority consists of the members of the GRCA board, and their first meeting saw them appointed as officers in the same capacity for the Grand River Source Protection Authority. They will work with the Source Protection Committee once it is formed.

New Shand Dam turbine

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Repair work to return the hydro plant at Shand Dam to production was approved by the GRCA board.

Norcan Hydraulic Turbine Inc., based in Carleton Place, will supply a new valve, turbine and generator, while Resource Industrial Group Inc. of Ayr will install this equipment at a cost of \$1.13 million.

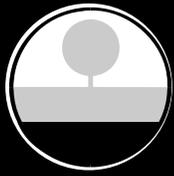
The hydro plant was shut down last July due to mechanical failure. This work will return it to production in 2008. A financial analysis of the repair resulted in a decision to keep the generating capacity of the dam at 600 kW.

The Shand Dam was constructed in 1942 at Belwood Lake and the hydro plant went into service in 1987.

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# GRCA Minutes

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**September 2007**  
**Volume 13 – No. 9**

## **GRCA** **General Membership**

**Chairman** - Alan Dale

**1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell

**2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast

**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills

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**Township of Centre Wellington** - Shawn Watters

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**City of Brantford** - Robert Hillier, Vic Prendergast

**Haldimand and Norfolk Counties** - Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

Craig Ashbaugh appointed chair of Source Protection Committee

Craig Ashbaugh, a retired educator with a long record of community service in Haldimand County, has been named the first chair of the Source Protection Committee for the Lake Erie Source Protection Region.

Ashbaugh, who now lives in Port Rowan, will lead the Source Protection Committee for the next five years as it guides development of plans to protect the sources of municipal drinking water in the Lake Erie Region. The region is made up of the watershed areas of four conservation authorities: Grand River, Long Point Region, Catfish Creek and Kettle Creek.

Ashbaugh was appointed by Laurel Broten, Ontario Minister of the Environment, under the Ontario Clean Water Act. The Source Protection Committee is being set up under the new Act to implement recommendations from the Walkerton Inquiry.

Another 21 members of the Source Protection Committee will be appointed in November and applications are now being accepted for this committee. They will represent municipalities, farmers, businesses, industry and the public at large. The application period for the non-municipal seats on the committee is open until Oct. 4.

The two first nations in the region – Six Nations of the Grand and Mississaugas of the New Credit – may also jointly select three members to sit on the committee. More information on the committee and the application process is available at [www.sourcewater.ca](http://www.sourcewater.ca).

Dry weather continues

Rainfall in August was below the long-term average across the watershed, continuing a six month trend.

The central portion of the watershed received the most rain, but it was less than half the average. Widespread rain came early in the month and there were a few days with a small amount of rain towards the end of August, but there have been few intense summer storms of the sort that soak the landscape.

Average air temperatures were 1.4 degrees above normal at Shand Dam, following below-normal temperatures in July but warmer than average temperatures in May and June.

Stream flows were well below normal throughout the watershed. River flow augmentation was high, resulting in reservoir levels that are lower than normal for this time of year.

Water conservation urged for five subwatersheds

Water users in five subwatersheds of the Grand River have been asked to reduce their water consumption by 20 per cent because of a lingering dry spell.

The Eramosa River watershed was declared in a Level 2 condition on Sept. 6. This includes portions of the City of Guelph, Guelph/Eramosa Township, Puslinch Township, the Town of Erin and the Town of Milton.

Under the Ontario Low Water Response Plan, a river is in a Level 2 condition when flows drop to less than 50 per cent of normal summer low flow. That triggers the request for a voluntary reduction in water use of 20 per cent.

On Aug. 2, a Level 2 condition was



declared on Mount Pleasant Creek watershed in Brant and McKenzie Creek-Boston Creek watershed in Brant, Norfolk, Six Nations, New Credit and Haldimand.

Two watersheds – Whitemans Creek, which includes Horner and Kenny creeks in Brant and Oxford and the Upper Speed watershed in Wellington County – were declared in July.

The request for a reduction in water use comes from the Grand River Low Water Response Team which meets by teleconference on Wednesdays as needed.

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

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#### Observation tower named after donor

The observation tower at Laurel Creek Nature Centre in Waterloo will be called the BMO Financial Group Observation Tower, thanks to a \$25,000 donation.

The tower is a component of a new green roof being installed this fall at the 30-year-old nature centre.

Fundraising for the \$250,000 project is ongoing and will include learning materials and tools to help children learn about the benefits of green roof technology.

The first phase of the project, the roof installation, will begin later this month, with interpretive signs, learning models and the Tower to follow.

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#### Class EA for Highway 24 discussed by board

The board heard from two delegations regarding the proposed Highway 24 corridor between Brantford and Cambridge.

Fred Leech, the area manager with the Ministry of Transportation explained the process. He said the class environmental assessment study started in 2006 and will be finished in 2009.

The study is recommending a new

transportation corridor, widening of the existing Highway 24 between Brantford and Cambridge to four lanes and improvements to Highway 8. The comment period for the current phase was extended from Sept. 19 until Oct. 19.

Dr. Paul Darey, a representative of the Stop the 424 Association, also spoke to the board about the proposal.

The board recommended that the route selection minimize the loss of wetland, that water quality and quantity of water be protected or improved and that the route selection consider environmental significance and use of GRCA land.

A further staff report on this issue will go to the board this month.

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#### Drimmie Dam hydro

A lawyer representing a land owner asked the GRCA to proceed with the class environmental assessment of the Drimmie Dam in Elora.

The land owner, LFL Properties Ltd., would like to develop a small 200 kW hydro electric generating system as part of the redevelopment on the south side of the river beside the dam site, lawyer Douglas Jack told the board. He said the GRCA would need to rebuild the dam before the hydro facility can go in.

The company would like to work co-operatively on a private-public partnership.

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#### Remuneration changes for board members

The board has voted to change the amount members are paid to attend meetings and conduct other business of the authority.

A committee of the board met twice to recommend changes because the remuneration has not increased for over ten years. They also considered the new committee structure which has resulted in longer committee of the whole meetings and they considered what other conservation authority board members are paid.

Members will receive \$125 for attending committee of the whole

meetings and \$75 for general meetings, which tend to be shorter.

The honorarium received by the board chair is set to increase to \$38,000 from \$35,880.

The two vice-chairs will receive an honorarium of \$2,000 each year, instead of the per diem rate for each time they attend other authority business on behalf of the GRCA.

These changes, which still have to be approved by the Ontario Municipal Board, will cost \$26,400 more each year based on 100 per cent attendance at meetings.

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#### The Grand River Biothon Sept. 29 & 30

The Grand River Biothon is Sept. 29 and 30 at Apps' Mill Nature Centre in Brantford.

Over 24 hours, volunteer teams search to discover and record as many different living things as possible to raise money to support environmental education at the nature centres.

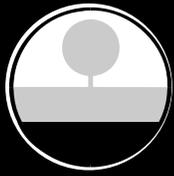
A free family event on Sunday Sept. 30 features live animals, hikes, T-shirt tie-dyeing, a children's penny sale, demonstrations, live music, and a silent auction.

For more information, contact Apps' Mill Nature Centre (519) 752-0655, or Sara Wilbur, Grand River Conservation Foundation (519) 621-2761 ext.

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# GRCA Minutes

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**October 2007**  
**Volume 13 - No. 10**

## **GRCA** **General Membership**

**Chairman** - Alan Dale  
**1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell  
**2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast  
**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills  
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### Water quality report

The annual water quality report was presented to the GRCA board in September.

Water quality samples are collected at 36 sites throughout the watershed by the GRCA and the Ministry of Environment. Currently, two water quality indicators are measured regularly – the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water and the amount of nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen).

Overall, the Grand River and its tributaries are nutrient-rich, so there is a lot of food for aquatic plants to grow vigorously. This can lead to very low dissolved oxygen levels in specific river reaches, so there are more nutrients than the river can use up in these stretches. Nutrients come from runoff from the land in rural and urban areas, as well as from sewage treatment plants.

Low dissolved oxygen levels in the river impair the health of aquatic organisms.

To better understand the health of the waterways, other key ecosystem indicators such as benthic macro-invertebrates, fish and other ecological processes need to be assessed.

Staff is talking with local universities and others to develop an integrated water quality monitoring program that builds on the existing program. This will provide more complete information that will help decision-makers.

### Conservation Grants

Five organizations and four schools are to receive 2007 community conservation grants.

The Grand River Conservation

Foundation awards grants to qualified community groups and elementary schools that are undertaking conservation projects.

The grants have been awarded to the Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence (\$1,725); Youth Opportunities Day at Luther Marsh (\$500); Woodland Park Child Care Centre, Cambridge (\$1,000); Guelph Field Naturalists (\$1,000) and the Evergreen Foundation for school tree planting (\$500).

The four school recipients each will receive \$500 for greening projects. The recipients are Abraham Erb Public School in Waterloo, Baden Public School, Christ the King Elementary School in Cambridge and Lester B. Pearson Public School in Waterloo.

Cheques will be given to the recipients at a gala evening to be held this month at the River Run Centre in Guelph.

The grants are usually awarded in early autumn. Applications for the 2008 grants will be posted on the GRCA website in the spring.

### Water users to cut consumption

Water users throughout the Grand River watershed were asked on Sept. 28 to cut their consumption by 20 per cent.

The persistent hot, dry weather this year has resulted in low flows in rivers and streams throughout much of the Grand River system.

The call for the voluntary reduction in water consumption comes from the Grand River Low Water Response Team. It declared the entire Grand River watershed to be in Level 2 condition under the Ontario Low Water Response Plan. The team is



made up of representatives of major water users including municipalities, farmers, golf course operators, gravel pit businesses, Six Nations and others.

Urban and rural residents can help by restricting outdoor water use, such as lawn watering and car washing, and taking care to conserve water indoors. Water conservation tips for homes, farms and businesses are available in Low Water Response Section of the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)

When a Level 2 condition is declared, the Ministry of the Environment sends letters to holders of Permits to Take Water, asking them to voluntarily reduce consumption by 20 per cent. Permits are required by anyone taking more than 50,000 litres a day from a river, stream, pond or well.

Of 750 permit holders in the Grand River watershed, about 430 permit holders will receive letters as a result of the decision and the other 320 received letters earlier this year.

### Warm dry September

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Rainfall throughout most of the watershed has been only half of normal during the last three months.

The rain that has fallen has tended to be light and sporadic, with few long soaking rains.

The amount of water stored in the GRCA's seven reservoirs is well below normal for this time of the year. Water is stored in the spring and then released through the summer and fall to maintain minimum flows at key locations.

The GRCA has reduced the amount of water it releases on a daily basis by about 15 per cent in order to ensure there is enough water available to maintain flows through to the next spring.

However, even though the flows are less than normal, there is still more than enough to meet the needs of the communities that use the Grand as a source of drinking water – the Region of Waterloo, Brantford and Six Nations. It is also important to ensure

there is enough water in the river to handle the effluent from the 29 sewage treatment plants in the watershed order to safeguard aquatic life and protect downstream water users.

During September, there were days when about 95 per cent of the water in the Grand River at Kitchener (Doon) came from the GRCA reservoirs. Flow augmentation was high at the other target locations as well: 66 per cent at Brantford and 50 per cent on the Speed River at Guelph.

### Voicegate test in New Hamburg

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The GRCA has worked with staff from the Region of Waterloo and the Wilmot Township to test a new Voicegate dialer system in New Hamburg.

The system can automatically dial homes and businesses in areas affected by floods. It can make 500 pre-recorded phone calls per hour. It can deliver a flood advisory message to alert people that a flood may take place and it can also tell them what to do when a flood is in progress.

The system will be used by Waterloo Region to warn residents and businesses within the floodplain during a flood. The GRCA made a presentation to Wilmot Council Sept. 10. Then on Sept. 17 a public open house was held and the test was conducted Sept. 19.

### Conference in Argentina

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In September, two representatives of the GRCA went to Argentina to attend the first International Forum for the Development and Management of Basins in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions.

The forum was suspended on the first day of the conference due to uncertain election results from three days earlier. However, the forum proceeded on an informal basis with fewer attendants.

GRCA Chair Alan Dale and Tracey Ryan, supervisor of conservation services, made presentations at the conference. Their travel expenses and a \$3,000 conference sponsorship were

paid thanks to a grant from the International River Foundation for the twinning between the GRCA and the San Roque Lake watershed in Cordoba, Argentina.

### Warning buoys to be removed

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Warning buoys upstream of seven GRCA dams along the Grand River will be removed the week of Oct. 15 to prepare for winter.

They will be put back in place in May 2008 after the spring runoff. Boaters using the river after the buoys are removed should exercise extra caution around the dams.

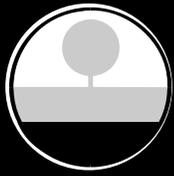
The buoys will be removed from dams in Dunnville, Caledonia, Brantford, Cambridge, New Hamburg and two dams in Elora. They are installed each May to provide warning to canoeists and kayakers on the river about the danger of approaching these dams which are all "run of the river" or "low head" dams.

The water upstream of the dams can be still and placid, but the area downstream can be dangerous. Strong currents at the base of the dam can capture a canoe or kayak and trap the occupant underwater.

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## November 2007 Volume 13 - No. 11

### GRCA General Membership

**Chairman** - Alan Dale

**1st Vice-Chairman** - Jane Mitchell

**2nd Vice-Chairman** - Vic Prendergast

**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills

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### Enforcing peat extraction

The GRCA is contacting peat operators to explain that peat extraction is now a regulated activity and to ask them to stop the extraction, or apply for permission.

Since May 2006, the GRCA has had the authority to regulate peat extraction through Ontario Regulation 150/06, which is also called the Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation.

Pursuing violators that continue to operate even when they know they are in violation will take staff time and the GRCA will also incur legal costs.

### Wastewater treatment plan for Waterloo Region

Two presentations were made to the board about the update to the wastewater treatment master plan for the Region of Waterloo.

Nancy Kodousek, the director of water services for Waterloo Region and Sandra Cooke, senior water quality supervisor with the GRCA, each gave a presentation. The long-term strategy is to upgrade and expand the 13 wastewater treatment facilities in the region to improve the quality of effluent and meet the needs of the growing population.

The GRCA supports the report's recommendations that call for more advanced wastewater treatment. Poor water quality conditions in the central Grand River mean GRCA staff has recommended more studies to investigate interim measures to reduce the short-term impacts of population growth and wastewater treatment upgrades.

The two organizations are working jointly on river modeling and monitoring initiatives.

### Upper Blair drainage study

The Upper Blair Creek Kitchener Functional Drainage Study prepared by Stantec Consulting Ltd. was endorsed by the GRCA.

The study will be used as a guide for planning matters and permit applications in this part of south Kitchener.

Updated floodplain mapping for Blair Creek will also be used to administer the Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation.

In addition, three steps will be taken in this area: paved or impervious areas will be limited to the amount that can be tolerated by the ecosystem, the natural features and corridors will be protected and the quality and quantity of stormwater will be controlled by stormwater management measures.

### Summer in October?

Hot weather in October, combined with low rainfall for many months, means that reservoir levels continue to be below average for this time of year.

The temperature at Shand Dam averaged six degrees warmer than normal up to Oct. 24. On Oct. 6, for example, it was 28.5 degrees at Shand Dam during the day and 16 degrees at night.

Rainfall for the month ranged from a low of 48 per cent of the average at Luther to a high of 96 per cent at Guelph, with most of the rain for the



month falling Oct. 6 when over 25 mm fell across the watershed. This was the first all-day soaking since April.

Stream flow is low throughout the watershed due to lack of rain. In some locations, stream flow is half the normal amount for this time of year.

Because the major reservoirs are also low, the GRCA is augmenting the river flow less than normal to ensure enough water is in storage to meet the needs until next March, even if dry conditions persist.

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### Silknit and Riverside dams

The GRCA board has offered to have staff help identify public safety measures that could be undertaken at the Silknit and Riverside dams in Cambridge.

The public has been concerned about the safety of these two dams which need to be repaired or replaced. The GRCA doesn't own the dams and it is up to the city and the province to determine the ownership.

However the GRCA is familiar with dam structures and staff can help the owner ensure these two Speed River dams are safe.

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### Riverview and Watershed Awards celebrated at gala event

The Marilyn Murray Riverview on the Speed River was named Oct. 16 for Murray, a Guelph philanthropist and a past president of the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

The Riverview is behind the River Run Centre and is on the Alf Hales Memorial Trail. Murray was honoured for serving more than 20 years on the foundation board. She also chaired The Living Classroom - Campaign for Outdoor Education, which raised \$2.2 million to support outdoor education for elementary school children.

At the same event, Mayor Karen Farbridge accepted a cheque for \$50,000 from the foundation, which completes the \$250,000 commitment made by the foundation to the Alf Hales trail.

The 2007 Watershed Awards and community conservation grants were also presented at the gala event. The Honour Roll recipient was Betty Schneider, while watershed award recipients were Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph, Dennis Wendland of Kitchener, Joe Kral of Guelph and a joint award went to Dufferin Aggregates and Capital Paving for their work on Mill Creek in Puslinch Township.

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### Environmental assessment of Elora's Drimmie Dam

Staff will negotiate an agreement with Sanchez Engineering Inc. to make safety related recommendations for the Drimmie Dam in Elora.

The dam is close to the Elora Mill Inn and it is deteriorating. The engineering firm will recommend interim measures that the GRCA can take to make sure the structure is safe.

In August a lawyer representing a land owner, LFL Properties Ltd., asked the GRCA to proceed with the class environmental assessment. The land owner wants to develop a small hydro electric generating system as part of the redevelopment on the south side of the dam.

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### Laurel Creek Conservation Area infested by pine shoot beetles

Pine shoot beetles have infested two hectares of land at Laurel Creek Conservation Area.

The beetle is native to Europe, North Africa and Asia and was first found in Ontario in 1992, although it was probably present for 10 years before that. There are no effective pesticides to eradicate or reduce their numbers. The only solution is to remove the infected trees from the forest. A low-level infestation was first noted at Laurel Creek in the 1990s, but the problem has become significantly worse in recent years, possibly due to mild winters.

The GRCA's forestry experts have decided to cut down all the dead and dying trees in this two-hectare area to stop the infestation. In addition, nine hectares of adjacent red pine have a

low level of infestation and those trees are expected to die in the next few years. These trees will be thinned to make this area more resistant to the beetles.

The lost trees will be replaced with native hardwoods.

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### Scientists measuring gravity in hunt for ancient river valley

Three crews have been using high-tech gravity measuring equipment to find an ancient river valley underneath the central Grand River watershed since it could be a source of ground water in the future.

Abitibi Geophysics Inc. of Val D'Or, Quebec is using gravimeters that measure tiny differences in gravity, to locate the Dundas Buried Bedrock Valley. The crews were touring the central part of the Grand River watershed near Kitchener, Brantford and Hamilton to find out how wide and deep the valley is at different locations.

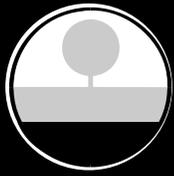
The data was expected to be turned over to the Ontario Geological Survey for analysis by mid-November.

The work is part of a three-year project led by the GRCA, with the support of the OGS, the Region of Waterloo, City of Hamilton, provincial ministries, other conservation authorities and universities.

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## December 2007 Volume 13 - No. 12

### GRCA General Membership

**Chairman** - Alan Dale

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**Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, East Luther Grand Valley, Melancthon and Southgate** - Tom Nevills

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**Region of Waterloo** - Jane Brewer, Kim Denouden, Jean Haalboom, Ross Kelterborn, Claudette Millar, Jane Mitchell, Wayne Roth, Jake Smola, Bill Strauss, Sean Strickland

**Town of North Perth and Township of Perth East** - George Wicke

**Region of Halton** - J. Barry Lee

**City of Hamilton** - Anna Kramer

**County of Oxford** - Alan Dale

**County of Brant** - Robert Chambers, Brian Coleman

**City of Brantford** - Robert Hillier, Vic Prendergast

**Haldimand and Norfolk Counties** - Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

### Source protection committee to hold first meeting

Twenty-one people have been appointed to the newly-formed Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee.

The committee's first meeting is Dec. 20 in Cambridge under the direction of the chair, Craig Ashbaugh, who was appointed in August.

The committee was established under the Clean Water Act to guide the development of plans to protect municipal drinking water sources in four watersheds: Grand River, Long Point Region, Catfish Creek and Kettle Creek.

The committee members were appointed by the board of the GRCA. Under the act, the GRCA board (in its role as the lead Source Protection Authority for the region) has named the committee members on behalf of all four of the conservation authorities in the Lake Erie Region.

This marks the beginning of a process that is expected to take about five years. The process includes public consultation at various steps along the way.

### Relief for the dry landscape

Rainfall in the watershed was close to normal – between 74 and 107 per cent of what would normally fall in November, offering some relief to the dry landscape.

Still, rainfall throughout the year was down significantly. At Shand Dam, for example, it is 41 per cent below the long-range average.

While the river flow in many areas remains below normal for this time of year, the reservoirs started creeping

up, turning around a downward trend. Modified dam operation that has seen the GRCA release less water from the reservoirs has also helped begin to turn around lowering reservoir levels.

The temperature was about a half-degree higher than normal through most of November, which follows extremely warm temperatures in September and October.

### Contractor hired for phase two of water budget

The firm that completed the first phase of the Grand River water budget and stress assessment in May will undertake the second phase of this study, which focuses on future conditions and drought.

The water budget will provide an understanding of groundwater and surface water quantities and flows. It will compare water demand with water availability and look at how water sources can meet current and future needs.

AquaResource Inc. will be paid \$184,000 for the study, and this money will come from the Ministry of Natural Resources as part of source protection planning.

### New planning policy comes into effect Jan. 1

A new policy will come into effect Jan. 1, 2008 that impacts new development, interference to wetlands and watercourses and alterations to shorelines within areas regulated by the GRCA (valley lands, wetlands and shorelines).

The new policy fills in the gaps and updates old policies that don't follow today's standards.



New regulations (under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act) and new direction from the province have led to approval of the GRCA policy for the Administration of Ontario Regulation 150/06 (also called the GRCA Policies for the Administration of the Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation). These policies apply to all applications for permits under Ontario Regulation 150/06.

The new document is posted in the planning section of the GRCA's website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

Looking back on developments approved before 1996

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GRCA planning staff will work with municipalities to review draft plans of subdivisions that were approved under the Planning Act before 1996, but haven't been built yet.

While these plans were approved according to the policies of the day, they may not meet recent provincial and GRCA policy changes.

Staff will look closely at developments that are within the floodplains, wetlands, watercourses and shorelines to see how they may impact the natural hazards. These are regulated under Ontario Regulation 150/06 which was approved last year. Planning staff will talk to municipalities about opportunities to address any policy discrepancies.

Until this review is complete, applicants for permits for subdivisions approved before 1996 will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

GRCA and cottage tenants settle legal dispute

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The GRCA and tenants who own about 700 cottages at two GRCA conservation areas have agreed to settle a long-standing legal dispute.

The agreement resolves issues relating to rental rates dating back to 2004 and also establishes a new lease that takes effect in 2008 for cottage lots at Belwood Lake and Conestogo Lake

conservation areas.

The GRCA board approved the new deal Oct. 26 and cottage associations at each lake endorsed it unanimously Nov. 24. It then was approved by the Ontario Landlord and Tenant Board (formerly the Ontario Housing Rental Tribunal) on Nov. 26.

Rockwood Dam to be examined

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GRCA staff will examine the impact of removing the one-metre dam in Rockwood Conservation Area.

This dam is at the top of a natural waterfall close to the ruins of the Harris Mill. It is not the second dam at the base of the reservoir.

Stop-logs that hold back the water have reached the end of their service life. Over the past year the upper logs have been taken out, which has decreased the size of the two hectare pond formed by the dam.

The large pond absorbs heat from the sun and warms the Eramosa River. Removing the dam would eliminate the pond and improve water quality in the Eramosa River.

A Class Environmental Assessment would need to be carried out before the dam is removed.

Grants for landowners to protect municipal water

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Landowners in the Grand River watershed who want to take action to protect municipal drinking water supplies can now tap into a \$571,000 grant fund.

The grant money is available to both urban and rural landowners whose properties are located within 100 metres of a municipal well or 200 metres of a municipal surface water intake. There are more than 190 municipal wells and five surface water intakes in the Grand River watershed. Maps showing the location of municipal wells and intakes are available at [www.sourcewater.ca](http://www.sourcewater.ca).

The money is available to landowners under the Source Protection Program of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. The program was

created under the new Clean Water Act which was passed to protect the sources of municipal drinking water.

Eligible projects include: decommissioning and upgrading a private well, runoff and erosion protection, pollution prevention reviews and inspection and upgrades to septic systems. The grants are available for projects that are approved by March 31, 2008.

More information on the program is available from Tracey Ryan, supervisor of conservation services with the GRCA at [tryan@grandriver.ca](mailto:tryan@grandriver.ca) or at (519) 621-2763, ext. 2269.

75th anniversary of commission

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This year was the 75th anniversary of the Act to Establish the Grand River Conservation Commission – the first watershed management agency in Canada.

River conditions in the 1930s had become so severe that floods, drought and pollution affected public health and the economy of communities up and down the Grand River.

The commission received its formal Letters Patent in 1934. At that time the commission included Brantford, Galt, Kitchener, Fergus and Caledonia. Other municipalities soon joined the partnership.

The Grand Valley Conservation Authority started in 1948 and the two organizations joined together in 1966 to become the GRCA.

**This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in December 2007.**

**It is a summary of the November 2007 business conducted by the GRCA board and committees. Space permitting, other noteworthy happenings and topics of interest have been included. The Grand River Conservation Authority welcomes the photocopying and distribution of "GRCA Minutes" and it can be viewed on our website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).**

