

# 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 2010  
Volume 15 - No. 1**

## **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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Many GRCA celebrations for 75th anniversary in 2009

After many public events and celebrations, the GRCA's 75th anniversary in 2009 is behind us.

The GRCA used this as an opportunity to engage the public with a series of events in a variety of locations. Several parks held anniversary celebrations with their visitors. An open house took place at the GRCA headquarters in October.

The GRCA partnered with the Grand Valley Trails Association to hold a series of hikes. About 20 people completed the 275-km trail and received GRCA 75th anniversary crests. Several dozen members of the Ancient Mariners held a special paddle for their 75th km along the Grand River.

The communications department also provided a series of four posters to all schools, and lots of articles and information highlighting the major events of the past 75 years.

GRCA presenter at UN's World Forestry Congress

The GRCA was asked to make a presentation about the Watershed Forest Plan for the Grand River to the United Nation's World Forestry Congress in Buenos Aires in October.

This event takes place every six years and it attracted 7,500 people from 160 countries.

Martin Neumann, supervisor of terrestrial resources, spoke about "Forest and Water: Working Together - a 75-Year Success Story." He described the collaborative approach taken by the GRCA, giving several examples, including the Rotary Forest project

near Guelph Lake.

The UN considers a key challenge of our time to be the difficulty in bringing people together from different disciplines and jurisdictions to work on forestry and hydrology. The conservation authority model that is practiced by the 36 conservation authorities in Ontario successfully encourages this type of collaboration. Within a conservation authority, people from several disciplines and different political jurisdictions work together not only for forest health, but also to build healthy watersheds.

High water warning issued Dec. 9 for Port Maitland

The Ministry of Natural Resources issued a high lake level advisory for Lake Erie on Dec. 9.

Police monitored roads along the lakeshore and implemented closures as necessary. The Haldimand County flood co-ordinator was on call to warn affected residents and businesses along the Grand River downstream of Dunnville Dam and in the village of Port Maitland.

For information on the Flood Warning system see the Flood Warning System page on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

No watershed conditions report for the month of December was presented to the board, since the meeting took place Dec. 11, only two weeks after the last report was presented.

Oakland swamp donation

Eleven hectares of the Oakland Swamp in Brant County have been donated to the GRCA.

The property includes hardwood



forest and provincially significant wetland. There are no structures on it. The GRCA has accepted four donations in the past three years in this same complex.

The Oakland Swamp is one of three large wetland complexes where the GRCA has acquired donated land recently. The other two are the Roseville Swamp and the Beverly Swamp. All three have many land-locked firewood lots. It is the GRCA's policy to acquire environmentally-sensitive lands if they become available.

Currently, the GRCA owns and manages 2.8 per cent of the land within the watershed.

### GRCA begins work on new water gauge at York

The GRCA has started work on construction of a new water monitoring gauge in York to provide better information on water flows and water quality in the Southern Grand.

The new automated station will be built on the riverbank just downstream from the York Bridge, which is located midway between Caledonia and Cayuga. It will replace a smaller, less sophisticated station on the side of the bridge.

The new station will look like a small garden shed. It will house equipment that will automatically measure water levels and water quality information around the clock, every day of the year.

### Trees available for purchase

Landowners with 2.5 acres or more of land (exclusive of buildings) can order trees from the GRCA by March 15.

The list of available trees, a price list and an order form are on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) in the Forestry section. The list is updated periodically. Orders for these trees must be for a minimum of 200 seedlings or 20 saplings.

Tree planting in the watershed has grown from 180,000 in 2008 to more than 230,000 in 2009, and more trees are expected to be planted this year.

But this is nowhere near the rate of one million in the 1980s, before government funding cutbacks.

For more information see the Forestry section of [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) or call 519-621-2763, ext. 2250.

### How to subscribe to GRCA news

This is a reminder that anyone can self-subscribe to receive press releases, flood warnings, GRCA Minutes and Grand Actions by e-mail. If you do this, you will receive this information at the same time as the news media.

To subscribe, send a blank e-mail (no subject line) to [GRCAnews-subscribe@grandriver.ca](mailto:GRCAnews-subscribe@grandriver.ca). You will receive an e-mail acknowledgement to which you must reply within five days to have your e-mail address added to the list. You will then receive a verification e-mail. To unsubscribe, send a blank e-mail (no subject line) to [GRCAnews-unsubscribe@grandriver.ca](mailto:GRCAnews-unsubscribe@grandriver.ca).

People may wish to subscribe only to **Grand Actions**, the newsletter that describes the many efforts of the GRCA and our partners to improve the environment within the Grand River watershed. This can be done free of charge by sending an e-mail to [jbaine@grandriver.ca](mailto:jbaine@grandriver.ca) or calling ext. 2302 and providing your contact information. Please indicate whether you would like to receive it by mail or e-mail.

### Heritage Day workshop Feb. 12

The theme for the 2010 Heritage Day Workshop on Feb. 12, 2010 is Beyond 20/20 Vision: A New Lens for Heritage, Arts and Culture.

The workshop takes place at the Cambridge Centre for the Arts. It will celebrate the links among heritage, arts and culture and their significance to a community's well-being and prosperity. While the spotlight is on the City of Cambridge, there are rich examples of cultural heritage throughout the whole Grand River valley.

The 13th annual workshop will feature community leaders, interactive sessions, tours and opportunities for hands-on learning.

A registration form and schedule is available on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca). The Heritage Day Workshop is held in a different part of the watershed each year with a focus on a different aspect of the Grand River's heritage. It is hosted by the Heritage Working Group of The Grand Strategy. The workshop is free, although donations are always welcome. Space is limited so please register in advance.

### Conservation Areas open for winter activities

Three GRCA conservation areas opened for winter activities in early January.

Shade's Mills in Cambridge, Pinehurst Lake south of Cambridge and Belwood Lake, east of Fergus are all open for ice fishing. Pinehurst is offering snowshoeing. Cross country skiing will be available at Shade's Mills and Laurel Creek when conditions allow.

Check the newsroom on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) for updates on winter activities and the calendar for special winter events, because conditions change quickly.

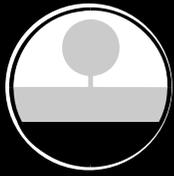
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**It is a summary of the December 2009 business conducted by the It is a summary of the December 2009 business conducted by the Grand River Conservation Authority board and committees.**

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**February 2010  
Volume 15 - No. 2**

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Alan Dale re-elected to GRCA for fourth term as chair

Alan Dale was acclaimed as chair of the GRCA for a fourth one-year term.

Also re-elected by acclamation were first vice-chair Jane Mitchell and second vice-chair Vic Prendergast.

Dale has been a member of the GRCA board since 2000 and served as vice-chair in 2006. He is a former member of Norwich Township Council and has served on several township and Oxford County committees.

Mitchell, a member of Waterloo Regional Council from the City of Waterloo, has been a GRCA board member since 2003 and a regional councillor since 2000. Vic Prendergast, a representative of the City of Brantford, has been a GRCA board member for 11 years, including nine years as second vice chair.

The Grand River Conservation Authority manages water and other natural resources on behalf of 38 municipalities and 950,000 residents. The 26 members of the board are all appointed by the municipalities of the Grand River watershed.

**A business case for fixing dams**

The estimated cost of replacing flood control infrastructure, such as dams and dikes, in Ontario is close to \$3 billion. Nearly one-third of Ontario's flood infrastructure is in the Grand River watershed.

The GRCA is the watershed in Ontario where the biggest investment has been made in flood infrastructure. Consequently, it is also the watershed with the highest maintenance costs, Conservation Ontario CEO Don

Pearson told the GRCA board when he presented the business case for maintaining the infrastructure. The current value of the infrastructure in the Grand River watershed is \$750 million to \$1 billion and it is crucial to maintain it to protect people and property from flood damage. This infrastructure prevents an estimated \$100 million in flood damage across Ontario each year.

Since 2003, the province has contributed \$5 million annually for flood control maintenance while municipalities conservation authorities contribute another \$5 million. The federal government doesn't contribute to annual maintenance, although it did help fund construction of many projects.

Conservation Ontario is working to raise awareness of this issue among politicians at the provincial and federal level and believes that other funding opportunities will include infrastructure investment for flood infrastructure.

**New park fees approved**

Park fees for 2010 have been set by the GRCA board and the vehicle pass will remain frozen at the current level (\$95) for the first vehicle and \$65 for the second vehicle.

Admission and camping fees are increasing moderately. Park admission is \$4.50 for adults (an increase of 25 cents) and \$5.25 at Brant. The fee for those age 6 to 14 remains \$2.50, but it is set to increase to \$3.25 at Brant Park. Children under 6 are free. Pool admission is included with park admission at Brant, and it is \$1 extra at Byng.

Nightly camping fees range from \$30 to \$33 for unserviced sites and \$37 to \$41 for serviced sites. For the com-



plete list of fees, see the parks section of [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

Eight of the GRCA's 11 conservation areas offer camping at more than 2,500 camp sites. This makes the GRCA the second largest campground operator in the province – second only to Ontario Parks. The GRCA conservation areas operate on a break-even basis. They record more than one million visits annually.

#### Very dry January weather

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Precipitation in January was 19 to 53 per cent below the long-term average across the watershed.

In fact, precipitation over the past three months has been below average, reflecting a drier-than-normal trend. This is a stark contrast to late 2008 and early 2009, which was very wet. The landscape has not held as much snow either – with less snow on the ground in most parts of the watershed.

Temperatures have been approximately one degree above the long-term average for January.

The majority of the river system is covered with ice. The major reservoirs are in the normal operating range for this time of the year, but Luther Dam is slightly above normal.

#### Four new foundation members

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Four new members have joined the board of the Grand River Conservation Foundation, which raises money to support environmental improvement projects in the Grand River watershed.

The four new members have strong ties to the business community in Waterloo Region and Brantford as well as extensive experience with charitable and other community-based organizations.

The new members are:

- C. Thomas Lebrun, QC, a lawyer who was a partner with the law firm Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP in Kitchener
- Terry Reidel, Executive Director of the Cowan Foundation of Kitchener

- Randy Walden, owner of Nedlaw Roofing Ltd. of Breslau

- Joy O'Donnell, owner of Grand Financial Planning in Cambridge and Brantford

The four new members will join a 16-member board that is led by President David Hales of Waterloo and Vice-President Crawford Reid of Brantford. The foundation was founded in 1965 to raise money to support projects of the Grand River Conservation Authority. More than \$6 million has been raised to educate kids about the outdoors, restore vital wetlands that cleanse our water, provide habitat that promotes wildlife diversity and offer opportunities for people to simply enjoy their natural world.

#### Nature Centre program update

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The GRCA operates full-time nature centres at Laurel Creek, Apps' Mill, Guelph Lake and Shade's Mills and also has three seasonal centres at Rockwood, Taquanyah and Pinehurst Lake.

In 2009, these centres hosted more than 37,000 students from six area school boards. An additional 16,000 young people participated in family, youth group and environmental day camp programs along with over 3,000 adult or parent volunteers.

Nature centre programs expanded in 2009 to include a specialist high skills major and GPS programs. This spring they are also planning Ducks Unlimited's "Project Webfoot" program to teach young people about wetlands.

#### Award for birding brochure

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Representatives of the Grand River Country Tourism Alliance attended the Economic Developers Council of Ontario Awards banquet on February 4th in Toronto, and picked up a prestigious EDCO Tourism Marketing award.

The award is for the "Trails Take Flight" brochure and micro-website project, completed last spring. The website has a downloadable brochure, maps and detailed information on 20

of the best birding and hiking trails in communities throughout the Grand River watershed.

Partners in Grand River Country is a marketing alliance that includes eight municipalities and the GRCA.

The "Trails Take Flight" project was partially funded through a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion. Trail and birding research was done in partnership with the Guelph Field Naturalists Club, with brochure and website design by the GRCA.

The "Trails Take Flight" brochures are available from local Tourism Information Offices, the GRCA in Cambridge – or check out the "Trails" section of the Grand River Country website at [www.grandrivercountry.com/trails](http://www.grandrivercountry.com/trails).

#### Be our Facebook fan

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The Grand River Conservation Authority now has a Facebook fan page and we invite you to join it.

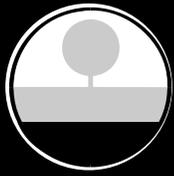
This is where we post information, photos, videos and events related to our conservation areas and other areas of work.

We also invite you to post your photos, videos and comments on the wall.

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**March 2010  
Volume 15 – No. 3**

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### Tree planting contracts

Four different companies have been awarded contracts with a total value of \$176,000 for planting 379,000 trees in 2010.

The GRCA carries out numerous tree planting projects on both private and GRCA-owned property each spring. The cost of these plantings has increased over the last few years to the extent that it is necessary to put the planting contract out to public tender.

The contract for machine planting throughout the watershed and hand planting of trees in the north part of the watershed will be done by Tree Logic for \$83,103.88. Hand planting of seedlings in the south and saplings throughout the watershed will be carried out by Wilderness Vegetative Management for \$76,000. Curb Appeal will plant seedlings and saplings on two GRCA-owned properties for a value of \$11,000, while Great Lakes Woods Ltd. will plant seedlings in plastic mulch for close to \$6,000.

Plantings are paid for by the property owners who require the service. If eligible, these costs may be offset by programs such as the Rural Water Quality Program.

### 20-year hydro contract

The GRCA has agreed to sign a 20-year contract with the Ontario Power Authority for power produced at the Shand and Conestogo dams.

The Hydroelectric Contract Initiative allows hydro producers to sign a long-term agreement at a rate of 6.9 cents per kilowatt hour in the base year 2009. Each year the price will be adjusted based on the

### Consumer Price Index.

Currently power from the Shand Dam is sold to Hydro One at a rate of 3 cents per kWh. Power from Conestogo Dam is sold under a contract that expires in September, 2011 with the rate of 6.01 cents per kWh.

A 20-year contract will provide a stable revenue source for the GRCA. Any increase in the plant's capacity would be eligible for revenue under a different program geared to encourage new sources of electric power at a rate of 13 cents per kWh. In 2010 the GRCA's hydro revenue is projected at \$364,000, compared to \$220,000 under the existing terms of sale.

### Conestogo Dam project cost now at \$3.1 million

The cost of work underway at the Conestogo Dam has increased from \$2.8 million to \$3.1 million.

The project began in July 2009 and is expected to be completed by the end of this year. The work involves upgrades to the stilling basin, which is the area immediately downstream of the dam gates. Concrete walls and energy dissipation blocks are designed to calm the water after it surges through the gates.

Most of the work is taking place in six metres of water. High water pressures have led to challenges with drilling anchor holes for the blocks. This is one factor that has led to the higher cost and increased construction time. During the project, it was also discovered that a portion of the south wing wall has poor quality concrete without enough strength to support the new construction. Extra work will be required on this part of the wall.



The stilling basin upgrade is one of two projects that will bring the dam up to safety standards set by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The second project is construction of an emergency spillway that is scheduled to be completed by 2015.

#### GRCA approves 2010 budget

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The board of the GRCA has approved a budget of just under \$33 million for 2010.

The budget will pay the cost of GRCA programs that protect water quality, reduce flood damages, protect natural areas, support responsible development and provide outdoor recreation and environmental education. It is about \$1.6 million greater than in 2009 but much of the increase is due to one-time stimulus grants from the federal and provincial governments for construction projects at conservation areas.

The GRCA has three main sources of revenue which include: \$10 million (32 per cent) from watershed municipalities; \$8 million (25 per cent) from the provincial and federal governments; \$13.4 million (43 per cent) in self-generated revenue such as money from campground fees, planning fees, tree sales, hydro generation, rental property income and other sources.

The municipalities raise the money through their general tax rates or through charges on their water bills. The municipal levy works out to about \$9.68 per person.

The entire GRCA budget is posted on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca). Search for "Budget Overview."

#### \$4.1 million for SWP

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A total of \$4.1 million of the GRCA's 2010 budget is going towards the Source Water Protection program.

The cost of this program is covered entirely by provincial grants. The program is developing source water protection programs under the Clean Water Act in four watersheds - Grand River, Long Point Region, Catfish Creek and Kettle Creek - to implement recommendations of the

Walkerton Inquiry.

The GRCA administers the funds for all four watersheds.

#### Dry February weather

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Precipitation in February continued to be well below the long-term average for this time of year.

The monthly average ranged from a low of 29 per cent at Shade's Mills to a high of 57 per cent at Luther Dam. The drier weather can be linked to El Nino, a warming of waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean near the equator thought to be caused by changes in the normal wind patterns. There is also less snow on the ground.

Temperatures in February were warmer than normal by about one degree. River flows in the Grand River and its major tributaries are in the normal range for this time of year. Reservoirs have between 69 and 90 per cent of their storage capacity available for flood control.

#### Provincial soil conservation program sought

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The GRCA is requesting that the province develop a long-term funding program to support conservation authorities in delivering soil conservation programs, such as the Rural Water Quality Program and tree planting programs. These help to manage the soil in a sustainable manner.

This request is in line with the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's recommendation that the province set up an aggressive soil conservation agenda, including a long-term strategy to bring Ontario's net soil loss to zero.

The GRCA has been working with agricultural producers to reduce soil erosion since the 1950s.

#### Drimmie Dam report available for public comment

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A report outlining options for the future of Drimmie Dam in Elora is now available for public comment.

The Environmental Study Report on

the rehabilitation of Drimmie Dam was completed as part of an environmental assessment of the deteriorating dam on the Grand River in downtown Elora. It outlines various alternatives to address the poor state of the dam, which is close to 100 years old.

The preferred alternative presented in the report is to build a new, but lower, dam in the same location at an estimated cost of about \$1.25 million. This option was identified as the most cost-effective way of reducing potential flood damages in Elora and maintaining the heritage and economic benefits of the existing dam.

Copies of the report are available at the Township of Centre Wellington Office, Elora Public Library and the GRCA Administration Centre in Cambridge. It is also on the GRCA website in the "Resource Management" section. The deadline for comments is March 18, 2010.

#### Tweets about parks and floods

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The GRCA has set up two Twitter feeds.

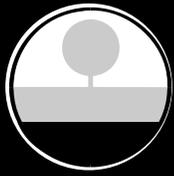
One feed is to distribute flood messages throughout the watershed and it is called *grca\_flood\_msg*. It is a new way that watershed residents can get direct notice of GRCA-flood messages.

The other is for park related items and is called *grandriverparks*. It will become especially active once the parks open April 30. It is a way to find out about campsite availability, activities such as tubing and special events in the parks.

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**April 2010  
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### **New park reservation system and number for campers**

A new camping reservation system for the GRCA parks opened for business early in April.

The new system has been designed to enhance the reservation experience and provide campers with an enhanced and interactive way to book their site online.

The service, found at [www.grcacamping.ca](http://www.grcacamping.ca), is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and allows campers to book a site up to six months in advance. As well, a call centre is available for those who want to book over the telephone. The call centre, which can be reached toll-free at 1-877-558-GRCA (4722), is available year-round (except for Christmas and New Year's Day) from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The parks will open April 30. Bookings for group campsites, pavilions and seasonal camping are handled directly by the park staff starting at that time.

The GRCA is the second largest campground operator in Ontario offering over 2,500 campsites throughout the Grand River watershed. Of the GRCA's 11 parks, eight offer nightly, monthly, and seasonal camping opportunities.

### **Warm dry weather continues**

Dry weather conditions continued through March, reflecting a five-month dry trend.

This weather is linked to El Niño, a warming system in the eastern Pacific Ocean. Total precipitation during March was 31 to 113 per cent of the long-term average, with heavier precipitation along the eastern side of the

watershed close to Lake Ontario.

The monthly average air temperature at Shand Dam was four degrees above the long-term average for March.

Even though it is dry, it is also the season of spring melts. A high water safety bulletin was issued on March 12 and a flood warning was issued for Grand Valley and Ayr on March 14. Conditions were monitored closely through that weekend.

The flows in the Grand River and its major tributaries were slightly above the normal range for this time of year and have slowly receded since March 14. The warm conditions have brought the frost out of the ground and it has dried up earlier than normal, reducing the potential for runoff and associated flooding.

All the reservoirs have been filled to their April 1 storage levels earlier than normal. They have 18 to 35 per cent of their storage capacity available.

### **Argentina twinning receives GRCA support for five years**

The GRCA has signed another five-year agreement with the Los Algarrobos Civil Association, of the San Roque Lake watershed in Argentina and the GRCA board has also agreed to provide financial support for exchanges.

The GRCA will provide \$8,000 annually for the next five years. This money will go towards exchanges, workshops and technology transfer. The GRCA will also provide \$5,000 in support for the Watershed Management Conference to be hosted by Los Algarrobos in Cordoba, Argentina in September, 2010.

While the two watersheds have



been working together for several years, the financial support for these exchanges has come from other sources, including the International River Foundation. Non-GRCA funds will be used for "on-the-ground" work, such as agroforestry demonstration sites at a farm set up to train apprentice agricultural workers in Argentina.

The GRCA hopes to raise half of the \$8,000 from external sources, while the \$5,000 for the conference would come from the training and development budget.

### Community conservation grants

Applications are now being accepted from community groups and schools for Community Conservation Grants given out by the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

Each year the foundation awards grants of up to \$1,000 to qualified groups (must be a registered charity) or up to \$500 for elementary schools undertaking conservation projects in communities throughout the Grand River watershed. Eligible projects must be tangible and available for the use or benefit of the entire community.

The deadline for receipt of grant applications is May 1. The grant recipients will be selected this summer with the cheque presentations taking place this fall. Applications can be downloaded from [www.grcf.ca](http://www.grcf.ca).

### Environment scholarship available for post-secondary students

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

This scholarship, worth \$1,500, is made available by the Grand River Conservation Foundation to help post-secondary students continue their studies in conservation and environment related fields. Applications are open to full-time students who have completed the third year or sixth semester of an honours program in a watershed university (Waterloo, Guelph, Laurier) or the second year of

a three-year program at Conestoga College. Students must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents, in environmental sciences, engineering, chemistry or manufacturing. For further information and an application form visit [www.grcf.ca](http://www.grcf.ca).

### Nominations now due for the 2010 Watershed Awards

Each year since 1976, the authority has presented awards to individuals, families, organizations and businesses that have taken action to protect and enhance the natural environment of the Grand River watershed.

The GRCA 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, so if you know a person, organization or business that you think deserves an award, please make a nomination. The deadline for nominations is May 1, 2010. A nomination form is available in the "Watershed Awards" section of the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca).

The 2010 winners will be selected by the Special Recognition Committee of the GRCA board and they will be honoured at an event in the fall.

### Three prescribed burns in Brant

The GRCA is carrying out prescribed burns on three properties in April to help maintain the remnant prairie and savannah habitats in the area.

Two burns took place at Brant Conservation Area on Jennings Road and on a 2.5 hectare parcel of land west of Paris, adjacent to the Paris Landfill on Railway Street. A third burn is slated for part of the Apps' Mill Conservation Area property.

The burn dates depend on the weather. There has to be approximately three days of warm, dry weather prior to a burn.

Fire is a natural part of the life cycle

of prairie and savannah ecosystems. It clears out non-native species and releases important nutrients which promote growth and increase seed yields for native species, which have adapted to survive fire.

### Another burn at Snyder's Flats

Another prescribed burn will take place on the Snyder's Flats property near Bloomingdale to improve the habitat value of the existing floodplain meadow.

The burn is scheduled to take place sometime in April. It will involve 11 hectares of the 96-hectare property nestled in a bend of the river in Woolwich Township, west of Bloomingdale. The City of Waterloo is on the western bank of the river, opposite the burn site. The exact date will depend on the weather.

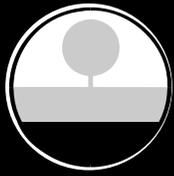
The burn is being managed by Lands & Forests Consulting which has handled many similar burns for the GRCA and other agencies. All safety precautions will be taken by the GRCA and the company to protect neighbouring properties. Natural firebreaks and constructed firebreaks will be used to contain the burn.

**This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in April 2010.**

**It is a summary of the March 2010 business conducted by the Grand River Conservation Authority board and committees.**

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# 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 2010  
Volume 15 – 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  
**Town of Erin, Townships of Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch** - Brad Whitcombe  
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**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

### Water Management Plan Update

The GRCA endorsed the direction of the Water Management Plan for the Grand River watershed and selected a co-ordinator for this project.

It has been more than 25 years since the Grand River Basin Water Management Study was released. That report looked at three key issues – flood damage reduction, water supply and water quality. It provided a list of more than 20 recommendations to address these issues and most of the recommendations were implemented.

Now that study needs to be updated so that it can provide a new roadmap for the next 25 years. These years will bring new pressures caused by rapid population growth, climate change and agricultural intensification. The plan will provide the framework to guide decision-making by the GRCA and its many partners. These partners include municipalities, the province, First Nations, federal departments and other stakeholders.

The new full-time project coordinator is Lorrie Minshall, who headed the Source Protection Program. She has stepped into this new three-year position, while Simon Glauser is the new source protection program manager.

The target date for the completion of this project is December 2012.

### Dry spell continues

Dry conditions continued through April, which had precipitation ranging from only 43 to 71 per cent of the long-term average.

In fact, the past six months have been drier-than-normal, with only four years since 1940 when records have been drier than this year. These

four years were 1940, 1946, 1987 and 2003.

The dry conditions stem from El Niño, a warming of waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean that changes the wind patterns. Conditions have not only been dry, but also much warmer than normal. The air temperature has been about four degrees above average.

Currently flows in the Grand River and its tributaries are lower-than-average for this time of year. Flows are equivalent to what they would normally be during mid-summer.

Reservoir levels are lower than normal for this time of year due to the dry conditions. Reservoir discharges have been reduced in order to conserve water for the summer months. Hydro production has been reduced as well.

Lake Erie is also slightly below the long-term average for this time of year, and this is expected to continue.

### Parkhill Dam Hydro Project Update

Thanks to a provincial green energy program, the GRCA is investigating construction of a new hydro production facility at the Parkhill Dam in Cambridge.

A request for proposals will be issued for consulting services to help develop the facility. The Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009 was passed into law a year ago. The new Feed-in Tariff program provides a guaranteed pricing structure for renewable electricity production and a 40-year contract with the Ontario Power Authority.

A hydro plant at Parkhill Dam is expected to cost \$4.8 million, but rev-



enue is expected to pay back the construction costs in under six years.

The GRCA already produces electricity at three locations – Conestogo Dam, Shand Dam and Guelph Dam. Combined, the three plants produce just over 1,350 kilowatts of electricity, enough to power about 1,200 homes.

### Guelph Rotary Forest event was a resounding success

The tree planting event April 24 at Guelph Lake Conservation Authority drew a crowd of about 1,000 people, including individuals, families, youth groups and organizations.

This is the third year for the Guelph Rotary Forest Earth Day celebration. A 40-hectare piece of land is being transformed into a forest.

The event also included displays, food, and a performance by the Funky Mamas, a Guelph band that caters to children.

A special component this year was the dedication of an outdoor classroom across from Guelph Lake Nature Centre that was sponsored by Ken Murray through the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

To see a video about this event posted online, check [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search for Guelph Rotary Forest.

### Dedication and tree planting event was April 25

A dedication and tree-planting event marked the completion of the restoration of a natural landscape along Chilligo Creek in the Cambridge community of Fisher Mills on April 25.

About 100 people took part in the tree-planting which completes the landscaping of the area around the newly built ponds.

Representatives of the groups involved in the project spoke during the dedication ceremony including: Cambridge North, Sunrise and Preston Hespeler Rotary Clubs; the neighbourhood group which led the fundraising effort; local and provincial dignitaries; the GRCA, and the Grand

River Conservation Foundation.

The project is the result of nine years of planning and work following the failure of a dam on Chilligo Creek. In 2000 the dam was removed, allowing the creek to flow freely, resulting in better water quality.

However, community members were concerned about the loss of the pond which had great scenic and recreational value. The GRCA and community members developed a naturalization plan that allowed the creek to continue to flow freely. It provides two off-line ponds to replace the bigger lost pond.

Fundraising was co-ordinated by the Grand River Conservation Foundation which worked with the community and the Rotary Club of Cambridge North to come up with more than \$150,000 for the project. Other major supporters of the project include the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Stantec, Schiedel Construction, the GreenHorizons Group of Companies and the Hiff Family.

### Take a Kid Fishing Day' May 8 at Belwood Lake

Junior anglers can learn from the pros at the Shimano Take a Kid Fishing Day at Belwood Lake Conservation Area near Fergus on Saturday, May 8.

The event is free for registered participants, although they will have to pay park entry fees, which are \$2.50 for children and \$4.50 for adults.

There will be two half-day sessions, with space for 120 people in each. The morning session will go from 8:30 a.m. to noon, with the afternoon session running from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Kids in both sessions can join in the free barbecue lunch from noon to 1 p.m.

The day is designed to get new anglers, between 8 and 14, involved in fishing and help them improve their skills. Children must be supervised by a parent or guardian.

The children will take lessons and then try their new skills at the stocked

pond in the conservation area. They'll learn how to cast, rig lures, tie flies, identify various fish species and their habitats and learn how to catch more fish. Archery lessons are also available.

For more information and to register, call Belwood Lake Conservation Area at (519) 843-2979 or e-mail [dstrubb@grandriver.ca](mailto:dstrubb@grandriver.ca).

### Grant from Monsanto Fund will help GRCA expand Rural Water Quality Program

More farmers in the Grand River watershed will be able to tap into a program to protect water quality thanks to a grant from the Monsanto Fund.

The Monsanto Fund has provided a total of \$142,500 (US) over two years to the Grand River Conservation Foundation to support the Rural Water Quality Program (RWQP) operated by the GRCA.

The money will be used to create the Monsanto Water Conservation Fund for Farmers. The new fund will allow farmers from parts of the Grand River watershed where the existing RWQP is not available to obtain the advice and financial support they need to adopt environmentally-friendly practices.

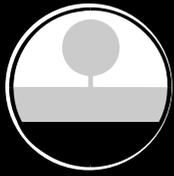
The areas include Haldimand County, Halton Region, Grey County, Perth County, the City of Hamilton, Six Nations and New Credit.

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# GRCA Minutes

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**June 2010**  
**Volume 15 – 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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Alan Dale elected vice-chair of Conservation Ontario

The chair of the GRCA, Alan Dale, was elected vice-chair of Conservation Ontario, the provincial network of 36 conservation authorities.

This will be Dale's third term as vice chair of Conservation Ontario and he is also serving his fourth term as chair of the GRCA.

Dale said these are challenging times and there is lots of work for Conservation Ontario to complete. He plans to continue working for the betterment of the watersheds and helping to build a sustainable future for the organization and Ontario. Dick Hibma, the chair of Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, is the chair of CO and Virginia Hackson, chair of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority is the vice-chair and treasurer.

Consultant hired to design changes to Drimmie Dam

The GRCA has hired Sanchez Engineering for close to \$50,000 to finalize the design to make changes to the Drimmie Dam in Elora.

The Class Environmental Assessment for the project has been completed and was posted for public comment for 30 days. Through this process, a preferred alternative was selected. Work is necessary because the dam has deteriorated. The preferred alternative will allow continued hydro production at the Elora Mill and also reduce the risk of flooding through Elora. The estimated cost of reconstruction is \$1.2 million, but it could cost more if the dam gate is wider.

The GRCA has money in the 2010

budget for the design and will seek funding assistance for the construction phase of the project.

Belwood Lake restaurant to be demolished this year

A restaurant at Belwood Lake Conservation Area is slated for demolition at a cost of \$16,500.

Known as Our Place Family Dining, the building is deficient and would need \$72,300 for immediate improvements.

Demolition will save the GRCA about \$2,800 annually in taxes. The demolition will also allow Belwood Lake Conservation Area to eventually realign the entry drive. It is currently a concern for staff and visitors because there is not enough room for cars as the line up to enter the park.

Much needed rain fell in May

Some much-needed rain fell in May, helping to modify the dry weather trend.

Rainfall ranged from a high of 131 per cent of the long-term average at Shand Dam to a low of 75 per cent at Shade's Mills. This provided some relief from dry conditions, but the past six months have been drier-than-normal. Shand Dam records show that only 10 of the past 70 years have had drier November to May totals.

The weather has been about one degree warmer than average as well. The lower precipitation and warm conditions has dried up the landscape.

Flows in the Grand River and its major tributaries have gone down to summer low flow conditions. However, flows are close to the long-term average for May, with above



average flows in the northern part of the watershed.

Lake Erie levels are slightly below the long-term average, but a high lake level advisory was issued May 7 for the lower Great Lakes including Lake Erie due to high winds.

New fishing book available in bookstores and online

---

The GRCA has just released an updated version of its popular *Fishing Grand River Country* book.

This book was researched and written by noted angler Stephen May on behalf of the GRCA, and published by James Lorimer Publishing.

It contains 160 full-colour pages with detailed information on fishing in all parts of the main Grand River and its major tributaries. The Grand River has more than 80 species of fish – more than 50 per cent of all fish species found in Canada. Being a river so close to major cities, the Grand has become a major recreational fishery of exceptionally high quality. To get your copy of *Fishing Grand River Country*, ask for it in local stores, or it's available in the "Online Store" section of the GRCA's website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca). The book sells for \$24.95.

Warning buoys and booms installed at GRCA dams

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The GRCA has installed warning buoys or booms upstream of GRCA dams to warn canoeists, kayakers and boaters to stay away from the dams.

Installation took place between May 17-20 at Dunnville dam and weirs, Caledonia Dam, Wilkes Dam (Brantford), Parkhill Dam (Cambridge-Galt), New Hamburg Dam, and the Bissell and Drimmie dams in Elora, Conestogo, Shand, Guelph, Luther, Woolwich, Breslau, New Dundee, Rockwood, Wellesley and Wellington Street in Guelph.

The buoys are marked with a bright red diamond, which is an international warning symbol for boaters. These dams are "run of the river" or "low head" dams. The water upstream of

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

The buoys and booms are installed each spring and then removed in the fall before winter freeze-up.

It is important to note that privately-owned dams on the rivers may not be marked with buoys or booms.

OMB hearing into proposed quarry near Luther Marsh

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The GRCA is concerned about the impact of a proposed quarry next to Luther Marsh on nearby wetlands and watercourses.

A below-water table bedrock quarry is proposed on a 62-hectare parcel of land near the village of Monck. The GRCA has been part of an Ontario Municipal Board hearing about the proposal. But that hearing was temporarily suspended due to a Drainage Act process.

A January, 2010 order of the drainage referee provides a framework for managing potential drainage issues. The OMB process will resume now that the drainage issue is settled.

Next GRCA board meeting at Byng Island for 50th anniversary

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The June 25 meeting will take place at Byng Island Conservation Area.

This year – 2010 – is the 50th anniversary of Byng Island, the southern-most park that is close to Lake Erie. It opened July 28, 1960. Byng Island is one of the busiest of the 11 GRCA conservation areas and most visitors come from outside of the watershed and stay overnight. It has one of the biggest swimming pools in the province and this attracts crowds on warm summer days.

Three new nature centre programs on offer this spring

---

Grand River nature centres are offering three brand new programs to schools starting this spring.

The first is a formal day-long pro-

gram in GPS (Geographic Positioning System) technology, primarily for Grade 6 students. Thanks to donations to the Grand River Conservation Foundation, each GRCA nature centre has a class set of GPS units.

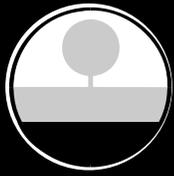
The second new program is the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), a new initiative of the Ministry of Education geared to high school students. This provides students with practical skills and certification upon graduation. Schools can access GRCA expertise and undertake hands-on projects to provide a practical grounding for students enrolled in these programs.

The third program, in co-operation with Ducks Unlimited, is the Project Webfoot wetland education program for Grade 4 students. This is free of charge to a total of 50 classes in the Grand Erie and Waterloo public, Brant/Haldimand Norfolk and Waterloo Catholic school boards, through a generous donation by SC Johnson and Son, Limited.

**This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in June 2010.**

**It is a summary of the May 2010 business conducted by the Grand River Conservation Authority 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." Reports mentioned in the GRCA Minutes are available online at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) in the Meetings section.**





# GRCA Minutes

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**July 2010**  
**Volume 15 – 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
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### New gatehouse for Brant Park

A new gatehouse will be constructed at Brant Park for just under \$400,000.

Lanca Contracting of Brantford will do the work. This park is a significant tourist attraction which records about 200,000 paid visits a year, of which 85 per cent are overnight and seasonal campers, while the rest are day-use visitors.

The existing gatehouse was constructed as a temporary building in the early 1970s and it has deteriorated significantly since then.

The new gatehouse will incorporate new communication technology, allow more efficient registration and will be barrier-free to meet new Ontario regulations. It will be 1,420 square feet and will accommodate washrooms for staff and the public in the future.

About half the cost will be covered by a Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RIInC) grant and the rest will be covered through park user fees.

### Changes in permit and planning fees effective Aug. 1

Permit and planning fees will go up on August 1.

The planning department has had an increased workload due to a high number of permits. The number went from 240 permits to 650 as a result of the revised GRCA regulation that came into effect in May 2006.

The fee schedule for permit applications, plan review title clearance and enquiry services will be increased by three per cent. There will be two other modifications – the minor permit fee for development will increase from

\$230 to \$370, while the plan review fee for complex applications will increase from \$4,675 to \$7,350. These increases better reflect the amount of staff time and resources that it takes to process these applications. Staff notified the development industry through their association and the complete report including new fees is posted in the Meetings section of the website.

In addition, a temporary planning position will become permanent to improve the department's efficiency.

### Two wet months in a row

Lots of rain fell in June for the second month in a row.

The wet May and June is in stark contrast to the much drier-than-normal November through April period. The change in precipitation may be due to the weakening effect of El Niño.

The rainfall ranged from more than double the usual amount at Shade's Mills in Cambridge (171 mm) to 20 per cent above normal at Woolwich (90 mm).

The flows in the Grand River and its major tributaries are above average for this time of year. The exception to this is lower flows downstream of Shand and Conestogo dams, because water was taken into storage. All reservoirs were in their normal operating range by June 23, with the exception of these two, which are above the upper rule curve.

Reservoir levels are slowly being reduced and the additional water is increasing river flows and resulting in an increase in hydro production.

A high water bulletin was issued June 28 across the watershed due to



more heavy rain.

Inspections were completed at major dams immediately following the June 23 earthquake, following standard operating procedures.

Rainfall, temperature and river levels are available in the river data section of the website.

### Optimization pilot project

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The GRCA is working with municipal water managers to optimize wastewater treatment plants. Optimization is a two step process:

Step 1: Identify the administrative, operational and maintenance factors that limit performance of a wastewater treatment facility.

Step 2: Systematically address those limiting factors, starting with the highest priority issues.

The goal is for the plant to produce higher quality effluent with the important side benefit of reducing operating costs and improving regulatory compliance. Optimization is a cost-effective compliment to wastewater infrastructure upgrades, which are very costly.

This pilot project will see local wastewater professionals participate in a collaborative process to evaluate and assess their wastewater treatment plant using a proven framework. Two municipalities, Guelph and Haldimand, have already successfully undertaken wastewater optimization.

This pilot project will bring optimization to other wastewater treatment plants within the Grand River watershed.

### Hunters fined for killing trumpeter swans at Luther

---

Two Toronto-area hunters have been fined \$1,500 each for hunting trumpeter swans at the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area near Grand Valley last fall.

According to Environment Canada, the two men pleaded guilty in June to one offence each under the Migratory Birds Convention Act 1999.

Luther Marsh is managed by the Grand River Conservation Authority, which owns most of the 5,600 hectare property. Luther Marsh is one of the most important wetland areas in Southern Ontario, providing habitat for a great variety of wildlife. More information on Luther Marsh is available on the GRCA website.

Trumpeter swans were once hunted and harassed to the point where, in 1933, only 77 were breeding in Canada. The swan carcasses in this case had large yellow wing tags indicating they were part of a restoration project to boost the trumpeter swan population in Ontario.

### Birthday party marks 50th anniversary of Byng Island

---

A public birthday party was held at Byng Island Conservation Area in Dunnville to mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of the park on Saturday, June 26.

It included free birthday cake, hot dogs and drinks. In addition, admission to the two-acre pool was free for the day.

The official opening was on July 28, 1960. The 470-acre park has 380 campsites and the pool is one of the largest in Ontario. The park records about 250,000 paid visits a year, with many of the visitors coming from outside of Haldimand County. During summer months, the park employs more than 40 people, many of them students.

Also, as part of the anniversary events, the regular monthly meeting of the GRCA board was held in the picnic pavilion June 25.

### New director joins conservation foundation

---

At its June 24 annual general meeting, the GRCF board of directors welcomed Robin-Lee Norris, a senior partner in the national law firm of Miller Thomson LLP, for a three year term.

Norris is a graduate of the University of Guelph and Osgoode Hall Law School and has been active in the Guelph community since she

began her practice at Kearns McKinnon in 1982. Currently she is also a member of the board of trustees at the University of Guelph, and sits as a director on the Guelph and Wellington Development Association Board.

Visit [www.grcf.ca](http://www.grcf.ca) to see the 2009 annual report, which has now been released.

### Swimming and tubing conditions at conservation areas

---

During the summer months, the Grand River Conservation Authority, in conjunction with local health units, regularly tests the water in its pools and designated beaches to ensure the water meets the guidelines set for swimming areas in Ontario.

Beaches are posted when levels of E. coli bacteria exceed the Ministry of Health guidelines. A posting is a recommendation that individuals swim at their own risk.

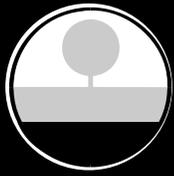
The 1.5 acre pool at Brant Park and at the two acre pool at Byng Island open for the season on June 12th. Please be advised that the pools close in poor weather conditions for safety reasons. Tubing facilities at Elora Gorge may also close for safety reasons during the summer season.

Check the newsroom on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) for this information.

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# GRCA Minutes

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Tel: 519-621-2761 Fax: 519-621-4844 www.grandriver.ca

**August 2010  
Volume 15 – 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

**CAO Paul Emerson announces his retirement**

Paul Emerson, the Chief Administrative Officer of the Grand River Conservation Authority, has announced he's retiring from the job he's held for the past decade.

But he won't be putting his feet up. Emerson has been hired by the County of Brant to be its new CAO, effective Sept. 7. Emerson, 57, grew up in Paris in the County of Brant. He received a Bachelor of Environmental Studies degree from the University of Waterloo in 1977 and has worked for the GRCA since April 1977. He held positions ranging from conservation labourer to manager of the planning and regulation programs before he was named CAO in 2000.

He leaves the GRCA just as it is embarking on creation of a new water management strategy to address flooding, water supply and water quality issues in an era of population growth and climate change. Emerson championed the project and worked with municipal, provincial, federal and First Nations officials to get it off the ground.

A consultant will assist with finding a new CAO for the GRCA.

### **Hot wet July**

Twice as much rain as usual has been falling in most of the major reservoirs in the watershed, with the exception of Laurel Creek.

A lot of this rainfall has come from thunderstorms, such as one July 17 that resulted in 111 mm to 125 mm over Brantford. The peak one-hour rainfall in Brantford between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. was over 60 mm, and over-

whelmed the design capacity of the storm sewer system, resulting in some flooding. This type of storm would only come once every 100 years. Waterloo was also hard-hit by a storm July 23, resulted in flooding on University Avenue.

River flows are above average for this time of year across the watershed, with the exception of Mill Creek. Reservoirs are at or just above their normal operating range. The rain has been mostly beneficial for water quality, since it helps to flush out the river system. But Lake Erie remains slightly below the long-term average for this time of year.

July at Shand Dam was the third wettest in 70 years. The wet spring and summer have made up for an exceptionally dry winter and spring.

### **Stepping up enforcement of GRCA regulation**

The Grand River Conservation Authority is stepping up efforts to enforce the GRCA regulation made under the Conservation Authorities Act.

Regulated lands include areas in and near rivers, streams, floodplains, wetlands, valleylands, slopes and the Lake Erie shoreline. Any regulated activities, such as building or changing a structure and adding or removing fill in these areas, require a permit issued by the GRCA.

A professional resource planner is assigned each time a permit application is made. Inspections by GRCA staff may take place before, during or after the work is complete. This ensures that the requirements of the permit have been carried out.

Like all conservation authorities in



the province, the GRCA is also responsible to enforce its regulation. The GRCA regulation was updated by the province in 2006. This resulted in an increase in permit applications and a corresponding increase in compliance problems.

Two enforcement staff have been hired and funds have been set aside in the 2010 budget to help cover the legal and consulting expenses that result from legal proceedings.

In 2009 a total of 628 planning permits were issued by the GRCA and permit application numbers are in line with that again during the first six months of 2010.

### New groundwater technology

The GRCA is working with the Ontario Geologic Survey (OGS), Waterloo Region and Guelph to test new technology at 15 existing observation wells.

Leading-edge equipment is being purchased from a New Mexico company. OGS is covering the \$400,000 cost of this project. The technology is a way to learn more about ancient aquifers. Reusable liners and multi-level ports will be installed to enable controlled sampling of water from a variety of aquifer zones.

The resulting research will provide better and more complete information that will help groundwater experts better understand the flow of water and the impact on municipal water supplies.

This is the most advanced deep bedrock groundwater characterization ever undertaken in southern Ontario. It will provide groundbreaking information related to source water protection.

The wells are in the central portion of the Niagara Escarpment region, mostly within the Grand River watershed.

### Consultant hired for Parkhill Dam hydro proposal

The GRCA has taken a big step toward developing a hydroelectricity

facility at the Parkhill Dam in Cambridge.

Genivar Ltd., a national engineering consulting firm, has been hired to carry out the work which could take close to two years. The company will review the economic feasibility of the project, apply for approval under the province's Feed-In-Tariff program for electricity generation, carry out an environmental assessment and design the facility.

The contract, which is worth just over \$400,000, is structured to allow the GRCA to back out of the project at various points if it is discovered that it's not economically viable.

An earlier study estimated that a turbine at the Parkhill Dam could produce enough electricity to power about 1,200 homes. That's as much power as the GRCA generates at its three existing facilities at Shand Dam, Conestogo Dam and Guelph Dam.

### Harris Woolen Mill restoration

The Harris Woolen Mill at Rockwood Conservation Area is getting a \$855,000 facelift this summer, thanks to special federal funding.

The scenic limestone mill ruins are a favourite spot for park visitors, special events such as weddings and film shoots. But last summer the mill ruin had to be closed due to safety concerns. Some of the walls and part of the foundation were considered unstable.

The contractor for the restoration is Phoenix Restoration of Scarborough. This project is on schedule and expected to be complete by the fall. The mill will reopen for visitors and special events next spring.

The mill was constructed in 1884 to replace an earlier mill that burnt down. In its heyday it employed 80 people, but ceased operation in 1925. It accidentally burned down in 1967, leaving a stone shell.

This restoration project received \$755,000 from the Federal Economic Development Agency under the Community Adjustment Fund. The GRCA and the Grand River

Conservation Foundation each contributed an additional \$50,000.

Washrooms and a gatehouse underway for GRCA parks

Three projects are now underway to improve facilities at parks.

The projects are a new washroom and shower complex and sewage main project at Elora Gorge, a new washroom and shower facility beside the causeway to the island at Guelph Lake Conservation Area and a new gatehouse at Brant Park. These projects were projected to cost \$1.3 million and this was to be shared equally by the federal and provincial governments and the GRCA.

The current cost over-run for these projects is expected to be \$202,000 in 2010. This is due to additional work that is needed and the current high demand for construction services.

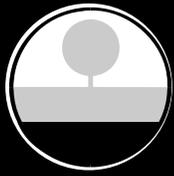
This additional cost will be funded from the Conservation Area Stabilization Reserve. The expanded scope of the Brant gatehouse will also require additional investment in future years.

**This issue of "GRCA Minutes" was published in August 2010.**

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# GRCA Minutes

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

## September 2010 Volume 15 - 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

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

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

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

Landowners are responsible for removing giant hogweed

Landowners are responsible for controlling undesirable vegetation such as giant hogweed that is on their property, including along waterways.

The GRCA has posted information about this non-native plant that is spreading in the watershed on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) in the Newsroom section. So far it has been confirmed at six GRCA properties where it has been treated. Many other sightings turn out to be angelica, which is very similar but does not grow to the three to five-metre height of giant hogweed.

The plant is not on the provincial list for noxious weeds, but some municipalities within the watershed have added it to their list. It has a negative impact on human health, sometimes causing skin problems similar to a severe burn.

Acting CAOs appointed by GRCA while replacement is sought

Two Acting Chief Administrative Officers have been named at the Grand River Conservation Authority while a replacement is sought for retiring CAO Paul Emerson.

Joe Farwell, who is currently the Assistant CAO for Resource Management, and Keith Murch, who is Assistant CAO and Secretary/Treasurer, will both be acting CAOs effective Sept. 4.

Emerson, who leaves the GRCA on Sept. 3 after 10 years as CAO and three decades as an employee, is moving on to become the CAO of the County of Brant.

Alan Dale, chair of the GRCA board, said Friday that a human

resources consultant has been retained to advise the GRCA board on the hiring process to replace Emerson. It's expected that a new CAO will be hired by the end of November.

Unusually dry August

August has been unusually dry, breaking the wet weather trend of the previous three months.

Monthly average rainfall at the reservoirs ranged from 20 per cent of the long-term average precipitation (at Woolwich reservoir) to 59 per cent (at Luther).

One exception to the dry weather is the portion of the watershed south of Brantford, where it has been wetter than normal in August.

Water users in the Upper Nith River area were asked in mid-August to keep an eye on water use after a drop in river flows in recent weeks.

Environment Canada reports that 2010 is also on track to be the warmest year on record. At Shand Dam it was nearly two degrees warmer than average.

The flows in the Grand River and its tributaries are close to or above the long-term average for the month. The exceptions to this are the Speed River and Conestogo River above the dams, which have low flows. The need to use reservoir water to increase river flows has been reduced this year.

Two contracts awarded

The GRCA has awarded two construction contracts.

Drexler Construction Ltd. of Rockwood has been awarded the \$270,000 tender for construction of the



Elora Gorge Conservation Area sanitary force main. Lanca Contracting Ltd. of Brantford was awarded the nearly \$400,000 tender for construction of the Brant Conservation Area gate house.

Both contracts will be funded from the approved GRCA budget for 2010 with assistance from the Recreational Infrastructure Canada (RIInC) Program. It is expected that both projects will be completed this year.

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#### GRCA receives \$1.3 million for major water infrastructure

The GRCA has received approval for \$1.3 million for two projects – the Class Environmental Assessment for Drimmie Dam in Elora and some work on the Conestoga Dam. Other smaller GRCA projects did not receive funding this year.

This funding has come from the province through the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) program. This program has provided \$5 million each year to all conservation authorities but in 2010, \$500,000 was cut from the budget.

The GRCA has extensive water and erosion control infrastructure and as a result receives significant financial support under this program. There is still more work ahead, including the stilling basin and emergency bypass at the Conestoga Dam. This work is required by provincial regulations and the total estimated cost is \$20 million.

Conservation Ontario is urging the province not to cut funding for repairs and improvements to dams, dikes and erosion control structures. It has sent a letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources to express concern over cut-backs in this area.

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#### Emerald ash borer found in Grand River watershed

On June 30 emerald ash borer was confirmed in the Grand River watershed.

The metallic green insect is highly destructive and attacks and kills all species of ash trees, excluding

Mountain Ash which is not a true ash tree. Native to eastern Asia, it was first discovered in Canada in Windsor Ontario in 2002 and has since killed 20 million trees in North America.

So far it has been detected in the Grand River watershed in Brantford, Cambridge, Kitchener and Oxford County at locations close to Highway 401. There is no immediate cause for alarm because the emerald ash borer poses no risk to human health and the impacts may not be seen for several years.

Movement restrictions have been placed on wood from the affected properties and the owners have been notified. Further regulatory measures to control this infestation will be considered once Canadian Food Inspections Agency (CFIA) surveying is completed in later this year.

More information is available in the Newsroom of the GRCA website. The insect has not yet been found on GRCA property, however, as it spreads and further monitoring is done this will likely change.

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#### 10th annual Water Forum Sept. 17 at GRCA head office

Two Ontario cabinet ministers have been added to the list of speakers for the 10th Annual Grand River Watershed Water Forum on Sept. 17.

John Wilkinson, who was named Minister of Environment in August will appear at the event. Wilkinson represents the riding of Perth-Wellington, which takes in part of the Grand River watershed. Prior to the shuffle, he was Minister of Revenue and before that Minister of Research and Innovation.

Glen Murray entered the cabinet for the first time in August when he was named Minister of Research and Innovation. He was elected to the legislature in January after winning the byelection in the riding of Toronto Centre. He was mayor of Winnipeg from 1998 to 2004.

The one-day forum is called "Inspiring Grand Transformations: Our Preferred Future" and will feature

speeches, panel discussions and displays on the current state and the future of the watershed.

Keynote speaker for the event is noted painter and environmentalist Ken Kirkby of Bowser B.C. who will offer his special insights into how individuals can make a difference in today's world.

The registration fee is \$100, or \$55 for students and seniors, plus tax. The fee includes lunch.

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#### Precautions urged at two reservoirs after algae bloom

Warning signs were posted around Belwood Lake advising people to take precautions because of the presence of blue-green algae Aug. 13 to 23.

A similar warning was urged Aug. 27 for Woolwich Reservoir on the Canagagigue Creek.

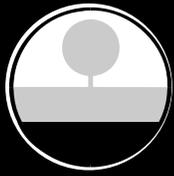
This species contains a toxin called microcystin which can cause illness when ingested by people or animals.

Algae blooms are a natural phenomenon. They tend to occur during hot dry weather. Algae feed on phosphorous, a chemical found naturally in soil as well as in manure, fertilizers and human waste. GRCA water quality staff believe that runoff from heavy rains in June may have carried additional phosphorous into the reservoir and that hot weather in July accelerated the growth of algae.

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# GRCA Minutes

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

**October 2010  
Volume 15 - 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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**Haldimand and Norfolk Counties** - Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

Tenth annual Water Forum  
Sept. 17 was a success

Two provincial ministers, the Environmental Commissioner for Ontario and a B.C. artist were among those who spoke at the tenth annual Water Forum on Sept. 17.

About 300 Grand River enthusiasts filled the grand marquee tent at the GRCA headquarters for this day-long forum. Accolades regarding local water management, partnerships and innovations were abundant.

The theme was "Inspiring Grand Transformations: Our Preferred Future." The event included two panel discussions and questions and comments from the audience.

The morning panel, A Grand Future, was comprised of community, business and academic leaders who discussed the role the Grand River can play in ensuring a sustainable future. The afternoon panel, A Grand Community, consisted of representatives from various sectors who discussed future community needs.

GRCA presents Honour Roll and five 2010 Watershed Awards

On Sept. 16, Allan Holmes received the 2010 Grand River Watershed Honour Roll Award, the highest award given by the GRCA. Holmes was the CAO of the GRCA from 1991-2000, which was a challenging time of funding cuts and also a period of successes.

An additional five Watershed Awards were awarded to groups and individuals who have undertaken projects to enhance the natural environment in the Grand River watershed.

The awards went to Clare Rennie for his work on the Guelph Rotary Forest; Paul and Steve Cressman who have planted more than 7,000 trees on their two farms near New Hamburg; Ducks Unlimited Canada for investing \$1.6 million in 80 wetland projects in this watershed; Chuck Beach who is rallying people and organizations to ensure the environment is a top concern for everyone in Brantford; and Wellington Green Legacy which started in 2004 and has now planted more than a million trees.

The GRCA has given out these environmental awards for 35 years. Links to videos about each of the recipients are posted on [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) in the newsroom.

Community Conservation Grants awarded to schools and groups

The GRCA and the Grand River Conservation Foundation presented 2010 Community Conservation Grants to three organizations and nine schools.

The community group recipients were Tallgrass Ontario, Brantford; Ancient Mariners Canoe Club, Cambridge; and the Eden Mills Millpond Conservation Association Inc.

The school grants are for school greening projects. Grants went to Lloyd S. King Education Authority, New Credit Reserve; Hespeler Public School, Cambridge; Ryerson Heights Elementary School, Brantford; Arthur Public School, Arthur; J. L. Mitchener Public School, Cayuga; Princess Elizabeth Public School Brantford; Cobblestone Elementary School, Paris; Thompson Creek Elementary School, Dunnville; and Trillium Waldorf School, Guelph.



The money for these grants comes from two foundation endowment funds: The Thiess Riverprize Fund and the Grand Champions Fund. The Thiess fund was established with the GRCA's monetary award when it was named the world's top watershed management agency in 2000. The Grand Champions Fund holds the foundation's endowment donations. This is the seventh year that these grants have been given out.

#### A new plan for the Grand expected in two years

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The Grand River Water Management Plan update will look at the water needs and improvements that can be undertaken within the watershed over the next 25 years.

The last time a similar study was undertaken was in 1982. The plan will look at three key areas. These include a sustainable water supply for communities and ecosystems, reducing flood damage potential and improving water quality to maintain river health.

The plan is in its initial stages and will take about two years to complete. Lorrie Minshall, a water resources engineer, is the program director. A steering committee has been set up. The goal is to develop an action plan that the partners agree to implement.

The most recent issue of The Grand outlines this in more detail and has been distributed to local residents. It is also available on the GRCA website in the publications section.

#### Dry weather continues

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Precipitation in September was slightly below the long-term average with a few exceptions. Rainfall was 86 to 112 per cent of the average during the month, depending on location.

Above average rainfall May through July contrasts with the drier months of August and September. Temperatures were warmer than average in September.

River conditions in the Grand River and its major tributaries are close to or below the long term average for September. Flows in the Grand above

Shand Dam to Legatt were average due to higher than normal discharges from Luther Dam.

All the reservoirs are in their normal operating range with the exception of Shand and Luther dams. These two northern reservoirs were above the normal level due to the wet summer months. Reservoir levels are now slowly being reduced.

River flows have been augmented over the past couple of months due to the dry conditions. About 58 per cent of the water in the river through Kitchener has been released from the reservoirs, while about 30 per cent of the water in the river through Brantford is from the reservoirs. Along the Speed River, flow augmentation is also 30 per cent.

#### Warning buoys and booms to be removed from GRCA dams

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Warning buoys and booms upstream of GRCA dams are being removed during October to prepare for winter. They will be put back in place in May 2011 after the spring runoff.

The removal schedule started Oct. 12 with the Dunnville Dam and Byng Island weirs and is expected to finish Oct. 22 with the New Dundee and Breslau dams.

The schedule is subject to change, depending on weather conditions.

The buoys and booms are installed between May and October to provide warning to boaters about the danger of approaching these dams. Boaters should exercise extra caution around the dams after the buoys and booms are removed.

#### National award for birding and trails brochure

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The Trails Take Flight brochure struck gold again, this time winning a national award.

"Trails Take Flight" is a marketing initiative to promote the Grand River trails and bird viewing opportunities. Twenty trails in communities across the watershed were selected for their exceptional bird habitats, and market-

ed to the public in a unique brochure and interactive website.

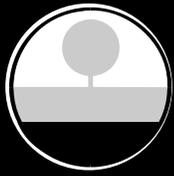
The project won a provincial marketing award from the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO). In early October at a national conference in Quebec City, the project won a 2010 Marketing Canada Award from the Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC).

This award was granted in the single publication category, and was chosen from an award program that included 180 submissions in numerous categories, from across Canada.

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## November 2010 Volume 15 - 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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2010 second warmest year in the watershed in 26 years

October's rainfall was slightly below the long-term average across the watershed with a few exceptions.

Monthly average rainfall ranged from a low of 77 per cent at Conestogo Lake to a high of 122 per cent at Guelph Lake. Rainfall has been more regular through October.

So far, 2010 is the second warmest year on record in the past 26 years. The warmest year was 1998, a year when there were fewer thunderstorms than 2010 due to less humidity.

The flows in the Grand River and its major tributaries are close to or above the long-term average for October, reflecting wet conditions this fall. All reservoirs are in their normal operating range with the exception of Shand, Guelph and Luther. These three are above the upper rule curve but the levels are slowly being reduced. Demand for flow augmentation has picked up during the late summer and early fall.

Dissolved oxygen, a key indicator of water quality, is better than usual for this time of year due to lower water temperatures and high river flows.

Easement for pedestrian bridge across the Grand River

The GRCA is granting an easement to allow the City of Kitchener to complete a pedestrian bridge over the Grand River as part of the Walter Bean Grand River Trail.

The bridge will connect the trail that now ends on GRCA land near the Pioneer Tower, with the trailhead in the area of the Doon Valley Golf Course in south Kitchener. This trail-

head will serve as a link between the Walter Bean trail and the Trans Canada Trail.

One of the abutments for the bridge is on GRCA land. Kitchener will cover the construction costs.

First draft of 2011 GRCA budget

The GRCA board got a first glimpse into the budget for 2010 and have asked staff to cut a proposed levy increase – the part of revenue that comes from municipalities – from 10 per cent to three per cent.

The preliminary GRCA budget showed spending of just under \$31 million, compared to a 2010 budget of close to \$33 million.

The levy was set to increase by \$922,000 or 10 per cent. This includes a 7.69 per cent increase (\$622,000) to base operating programs and a 27.3 per cent increase (\$300,000) to capital programs due to spending on water control structures.

The GRCA board asked staff to suggest alternative scenarios to achieve the three per cent increase. This report will be discussed by the committee Nov. 12.

Changes to the budget will be reviewed by the board over the next few months. The budget is scheduled to be ratified by the board at the annual general meeting in February.

Post-secondary MOUs signed

Agreements between the GRCA and three post-secondary institutions to advance shared goals in research and education were renewed in October.

The memoranda of agreement recognize common interests in improving research and education. The



renewed agreements were with Wilfrid Laurier University, the University of Guelph and Conestoga College. The agreement with the University of Waterloo was signed last year to coincide with the launch of the opening of the Grand River Collection in the Dana Porter Library.

These agreements promote research and education aimed at improving watershed health, resilience and sustainability; increasing heritage awareness and conservation; improving human and environment relationships within the watershed and assisting the GRCA in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating resources management in the Grand River watershed.

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### Draft Luther management plan

A draft management plan for Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area 2010-2019 is ready to be released for public consultation.

The plan went to the board for approval in October. The previous plan was created in 1991 and the new one is consistent with it, but places more emphasis on ecosystem approaches, species-at-risk, monitoring and habitat restoration.

The 30-day public consultation will include posting to the GRCA website (check the Newsroom for a link) and the province's environmental registry.

Luther was created in 1952 with the construction of a small dam over Black Creek, which empties into the Grand River. The dam created a reservoir and the wilderness area around it has grown in size and importance over the decades.

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### Cormorant numbers stable at Luther Marsh

The cormorant population at Luther Marsh Wilderness Area has not increased dramatically in recent years.

Cormorants are black-green water birds that can be destructive in large numbers. The GRCA considered a cormorant cull in 2006, but opted not to take this step and now it looks like it will not be necessary, although culls have been undertaken at other loca-

tions in the Great Lakes region.

The initial concern was that cormorants could overwhelm the heronry at the marsh because they were initially nesting at a rookery constructed for herons. The number of breeding pairs of cormorants has not increased at Luther in recent years, likely because the lake is very shallow and not ideal habitat for these birds.

Cormorants are also breeding at other GRCA reservoirs, such as Belwood Lake and Guelph Lake, where the water is deeper. The cormorants no longer appear to be a threat to the herons, which continue to be seen regularly at Luther and throughout the watershed.

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### ECO Annual 2010 report highlights conservation issues

A report about Ontario's environmental commissioner, Gord Miller's looked into environmental issues says Ontario's conservation authorities make an important contribution to natural resource conservation.

Miller recommends redefining conservation at provincial, watershed and municipal levels to include the new, broader understanding of the natural world that has developed recently.

This means a fundamental change in the way we live and function and a redefined conservation ethic that is deeply ingrained in our collective psyche, he said.

Topics in the report that are of interest to the GRCA and other conservation authorities include tree planting and biodiversity, wetland drainage, integrated watershed management, storm water management, protection of the Waterloo, Paris, and Galt moraines and retrofitting dams to incorporate fish ladders.

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### Birding brochure strikes gold with national awards

The Trails Take Flight brochure struck gold again, this time winning a national award.

Trails Take Flight is a marketing initiative to promote the Grand River trails and bird viewing opportunities.

Twenty trails in communities across the watershed were selected for their exceptional bird habitats, and marketed to the public in a unique brochure and interactive website.

The project won a provincial marketing award from the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO). In early October at a national conference in Quebec City, the project won a 2010 Marketing Canada Award from the Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC).

This award was granted in the single publication category, and was chosen from an award program that included 180 submissions in numerous categories, from across Canada. The brochure is now nominated for two other national awards.

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### 2011 meeting schedule

The schedule for GRCA committee of the whole and general membership meetings has been set for 2011.

Committee of the whole meetings will continue to take place on the second Thursday of each month. However in August no committee meeting will be held, as is usually the case.

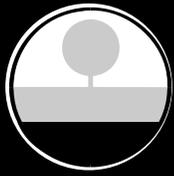
The general membership meetings will take place on the fourth Friday of each month with the exception of April and July, when they will be held on the fifth Friday.

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# GRCA Minutes

Grand River Conservation Authority, 400 Clyde Road, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 5W6  
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## December 2010 Volume 15 - No. 12

### 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

**Town of Erin, Townships of Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch** - Brad Whitcombe

**City of Guelph** - Vicki Beard, Mike Salisbury

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

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

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

**City of Hamilton** - Jeanette Jamieson

**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

### Joe Farwell named new CAO

Joe Farwell has been appointed the new Chief Administrative Officer of the Grand River Conservation Authority.

The announcement was made by GRCA Chair Alan Dale at a board meeting Nov. 12. He succeeds Paul Emerson, who was CAO until September before leaving to take the job of CAO for the County of Brant.

Farwell started his career with the GRCA in 1988 as a soil conservation engineer, and moved up through the organization in a variety of engineering and management positions. He was named Assistant CAO - Resource Management in 2008.

Farwell grew up on a Huron County farm. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from the University of Guelph and a Master of Business Administration degree from Wilfrid Laurier University.

He is president of the Canadian Dam Association, and a member of the Provincial Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act Advisory Panel and the Professional Engineers of Ontario.

"I'm committed to working with our staff and our board of directors to do our part to make sure the Grand River watershed continues to be a place we can all be proud to call home," said Farwell.

"The river winds its way through our communities and is linked to our lives. I believe that when we look after our rivers and streams and the lands that feed them, we look after our future."

### Woolner Flats land sale

The GRCA is putting seven hectares

of land in the area of the Woolner Flats in south Kitchener up for sale, but is going to keep a two-hectare section in the same area at the request of nearby residents.

Several people came to the Nov. 12 board meeting to say they had no difficulty with the GRCA's plans to sell the larger parcel of land, but they want the smaller parcel to remain in the GRCA's jurisdiction.

After the presentations, staff were directed to conduct a design brief for the surplus lands to ensure that future development meets the objectives of the GRCA's Sustainable Development Policy. The surplus land will be listed and sold on the open market, subject to final approval by the GRCA general membership.

Draft budget to be reviewed by partner municipalities

The second draft of the GRCA budget was reviewed by the board and this version will go to municipalities to assist them in the preparation of their municipal budgets.

The proposed \$30.7 million budget keeps the levy contributed by municipalities to the GRCA budget at three per cent over the prior year.

A number of proposed cost-cutting measures are contemplated in order to achieve this proposed levy increase. The final 2011 budget will be passed by the GRCA board in February.

Grand River Source Protection assessment report

Following the GRCA board meeting in November, the Grand River Source Protection Authority met to look at the proposed assessment report for



the Grand River Source Protection Area.

This report contains the scientific data upon which the source protection plan for the Grand River will be based. It was available for a 30 day consultation period Nov. 5 to Dec. 6. This proposed assessment report can be viewed at the GRCA office or at [www.sourcewater.ca](http://www.sourcewater.ca).

The Source Protection Authority cannot make changes to the proposed Grand River Source Protection Area Assessment Report and does not "approve" it.

Staff will bring the proposed report forward to the Grand River Source Protection Authority together with any comments received at its Dec. 17 meeting. These will then be submitted to the Minister of the Environment for final approval.

#### Best practices for below water table aggregate operations

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The GRCA board accepted a paper that explains the technical aspects for cumulative effects of below-water aggregate operations.

This paper includes general roles and responsibilities that have been accepted by the provincial ministries of natural resources and the environment as well as the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association.

It is entitled Cumulative Effects Assessment (Water Quality and Quantity) Best Practices Paper for Below-Water Sand and Gravel Extraction Operations and is posted in the Meetings section of the GRCA website.

The GRCA will continue to chair and participate in a joint committee and work with other organizations on this issue. The Region of Waterloo and the County of Wellington will be invited to participate on the joint committee in 2011.

#### Warm dry November

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November was unusually dry and warm.

Rainfall during the month was well

below the long-term average, ranging from a low of 39 per cent at Shand Dam to a high of only 61 per cent of the long-term average at Shades' Mills.

Much of the groundwater recharge takes place during late fall and early spring. The impact of less rain is noticeably lower pond levels. Next summer there may be a need for more river augmentation to help maintain water quality and ensure enough water is available for municipal water supplies.

Every month during 2010 experienced warmer-than-normal temperatures. During November, temperatures were about three degrees above average. Warmer air temperatures mean that water evaporates more quickly and this may also lead to a scarcity of water on the landscape next summer.

#### 'Tis the time for giving green

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This holiday season, consider giving the gift of a strong and resilient natural world by making a donation to the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

Whether it is for family, friends or someone you appreciate in your community, a gift in support of tree planting, trails and special natural places is unique and will be appreciated for generations to come.

A \$30 contribution will cover the costs to plant a tree in your area, or spend \$20 to help keep our trail systems in top shape for the community. The recipient of your gift will receive a beautiful personalized card from the GRCF, and you will receive a charitable tax receipt.

Give by visiting [www.grcf.ca](http://www.grcf.ca), calling Doina Hartley toll-free at 877-29-GRAND (877-294-7263) or e-mailing [dhartley@grandriver.ca](mailto:dhartley@grandriver.ca).

Please order by Friday, Dec. 17 to ensure that your gift card will arrive before the holidays.

Sign up now for Grand Actions newsletter

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The GRCA's newsletter comes out

every two months and anyone is welcome to subscribe at no cost.

The newsletter, Grand Actions, started in 1996. It is packed with information about initiatives taking place up and down the Grand River and its tributaries. It also has information about the GRCA and its many partners.

Grand Actions is available by mail or by e-mail. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, or if you would like your contact information updated, please send an e-mail to [jbaine@grandriver.ca](mailto:jbaine@grandriver.ca) or call ext. 2302.

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