



Grand River
Conservation
Authority



The Grand:
A Canadian
Heritage River

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Cover Photo

Kim Connors, a researcher studying the Grand River between Paris and Brantford under the Exceptional Waters program, holds up a redhorse sucker found during the studies.



Fish and people

New approaches to fisheries management

By Jack G. Imhof
Trout Unlimited Canada

‘Hi, I’m from the government, I’m here to help you!’

It’s a phrase that has often been used as the punchline for a joke. However, in more recent years, with government cut-backs in agencies and services, the refrain is now just as likely to be: “Hi, I’m from the government, can people help me?”

Government is moving away from doing it all, to a more supportive role in which communities help to direct the management of their local rivers and lakes. Since fisheries are public property, it does make sense that the “owners” assist with management. After all, sound resource management should be everyone’s business, not just government biologists and anglers.

Canada is blessed with an abundance of rivers and lakes but many of our rivers and lakes have been damaged and many more are threatened by new development and climate change.

At the same time, there is increasing pressure for multiple uses of our rivers and lakes for fishing, hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, tubing, jet-skiing, and birding. Often these activities spark conflicts amongst users.

Past management practices do not provide guidance to solve these problems; simpler and smaller is not necessarily the right government strategy. With shrinking government agencies, we need to think of new ways of doing things.

This new approach emphasizes resource management in close partnership with anglers and local communities. Under this model, government supports initiatives, but local communities do the work.

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Watersheds are logical geological units for management of water and aquatic resources. The watershed integrates the chemistry, water flow characteristics and impacts of human activities. Anglers and fisheries professionals are beginning to realize that they must expand their management to encompass the watershed.

The Grand River Fisheries Management Plan, developed for the 6,800 square kilometre basin in Ontario, is an example of a community-based watershed planning process. Begun in 1995 and completed in 1998, the plan was developed with the community of anglers and interest groups leading the process. The Grand River Conservation Authority and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources facilitated and provided technical support. A review of the program, including a series of public meetings, has been held in the past few months.

Blank slate

Warren Yerex, Water Resources Supervisor for the GRCA says: "We wanted to start the process with a blank sheet of paper. Past plans were used only as background information. We wanted the anglers to create this plan, we want them to buy into this plan".

"Create" and "buy in" they did. The anglers on the committee represented angler groups from the entire watershed. They worked with the agencies to develop an open, transparent process, and established a core set of principles to guide their process. They requested scientific data and technical information to determine what fish community objectives were possible, preferable and ideal.

The committee of anglers and agency staff then conferred with anglers throughout the watershed in two major



Researchers conduct measurements in the Grand River as part of a study of the Exceptional Waters reach between Paris and Brantford.

sets of public meetings spaced over two years. The first meeting sought confirmation of present known fish species distributions and asked anglers what they wanted.

The second set of meetings determined if they had got the ideas right.

The watershed was divided into three major geological zones based upon its geology. These three zones defined the potential for specific fish communities: coldwater (e.g. brook trout); mixed water (e.g. rainbow; brown; walleye; bass); warmwater (northern pike, channel catfish; black crappie; redhorse suckers, etc.).

The zoning of the river enabled anglers to understand what was possible and what was not possible in any particular sub-basin of the Grand. For example, Zone 1 and 3 are composed of fine-grained sediments that do not allow

groundwater to move actively through the soils. These two zones are limited to primarily warm water with some isolated, mixed water communities. Coldwater and mixed water communities dominate Zone 2, which contains active groundwater systems because of the coarse soils.

The Grand River Fisheries Management Plan is actually seven integrated plans. In order to make the plan readable and relevant to all anglers within the watershed, the plans were subdivided into seven sub-basins: Upper, Middle and Lower Grand; Conestogo River; Speed River; Nith River and Whiteman's Creek. The three geological zones were maintained to assist in explaining the opportunities and constraints placed upon each sub-basin by geology. Each sub-basin was further subdivided into specific water types: mainstem, coldwater tributaries; mixed water tributaries; warmwater tributaries; ponds and reservoirs.

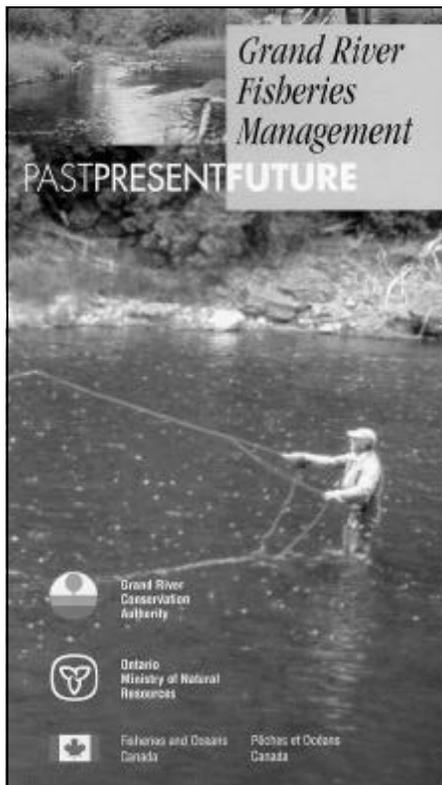
Scientific principles

The plan was conceived by anglers, for anglers, using sound scientific and management principles. The plan, completed in November 1998, is owned by the anglers, supported by the agencies, endorsed by the municipalities within the watershed and now being implemented by the anglers with the assistance of the agencies and with funding from corporations and businesses as well.

One of the major ideas was the recognition and protection and special management of reaches of river of exceptional quality and productivity within the Grand River watershed. Anglers recognized that in some reaches of river, specific combinations of geology, topography and land uses created waters that contained unusual or highly sought after fish species, were more productive, and aesthetically pleasing than other reaches of water in the watershed or region.

The term "Exceptional Waters" was coined many years ago by resource man-

One of the major ideas was the recognition, protection and special management of reaches of river of exceptional quality and productivity within the Grand watershed.



The Grand River Fisheries Management Plan, described in this brochure, is an example of a collaborative approach to management issues.

agers trying to express the uniqueness of some of the rivers in their jurisdictions. In a paper published in 1990, Stephen Born, professor at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, discussed the application of the “Exceptional Waters approach” in some American states.

The Exceptional Waters (EW) Approach was initiated in 1998 in order to develop a community-based process to identify, protect, manage and enhance these reaches of river. The initiative was launched by a consortium of organizations including: OMNR, Fly Fishing Canada, the Izaak Walton Flyfishing Club and the University of Guelph School of Rural Planning and Development. The program is now being endorsed and promoted by Trout Unlimited Canada as a major means by which members, chapters and communities can work to manage local waters of exceptional quality and productivity.

One of the reaches is a section of the Grand River between Paris and

Brantford, where considerable study has been done in the last two years dedicated to developing a management plan for the reach to accommodate the growing number of users while protecting and enhancing the natural habitat.

Work together

The focus of the Exceptional Waters approach is to assist local landowners, community groups, anglers and other interests to work together to develop a planning process on a workable length of river.

The process helps the local groups and landowners identify issues of concern to them and develop a process to work together in a way that satisfies personal interests, provides recreational and possibly economic opportunities while protecting and enhancing these Exceptional Waters. Traditionally, most of the focus for management has been on restoration of degraded waters. What the EW approach attempts to do is develop centers of excellence to be used as examples for the rest of a watershed.

Although not all river sections within a watershed can be exceptional, the Exceptional Waters approach ensures

that all waters within the same watershed are maintained at a level of health that ensures the overall health of the entire watershed and contributes to the protection of Exceptional Waters within the same watershed.

Anglers are not alone in their interest to protect and restore the watersheds that support their favourite rivers. Government agencies can certainly not do it all, nor should they (if they ever could).

We need a new paradigm, one that uses a watershed approach to set context and direction and strong partnerships between anglers, local communities, business, municipalities and agencies to implement these directions at the local level.

It is essential that the local community become involved because ultimately the resources, the fish, birds, animals, etc. are the property and in the keeping of everyone who lives in Canada even though these resources may be on private lands.

Therefore, the resources of specific Exceptional Waters are in the ownership of you, your neighbours and your community.

Honouring watershed stewards

Each year the Grand River Conservation Authority recognizes the efforts of individuals and groups by presenting Honour Roll Awards and Watershed Awards.

For 2002, the Honour Roll Award was presented to the Brant Waterways Foundation.

Winners of Watershed Awards were the Kitchen Family, owners of Erlhaven Farms in Oxford County; the members of the Home Depot Green Team at the company’s Waterloo store; Bill Thompson, outdoor writer with the Kitchener-Waterloo Record; Margaret R. (Peggy Lang) of Brantford; and the Lower Grand River Land Trust.

They were honoured at a special ceremony held in December. As part of the

event, a slide show detailing the accomplishments of each winner, was presented. This article, adapted from the script for the show, highlights two winners. The others were presented in the previous edition of Grand Actions.

Bill Thompson: an advocate for the environment

Many of us have seen Bill Thompson’s columns in the Kitchener-Waterloo Record.

Bill has been with the paper for 15 years and pounds out his weekly column, *Outdoors with Bill Thompson*.

He focuses on provincial resource management issues and human-interest



Bill Thompson has been a passionate advocate for the outdoors in his columns and other activities.

stories.

And he gives strong support to any fishery restoration program in the watershed, whether or not the GRCA is involved.

Bill is also involved in a few more things. He's a member of the Outdoor Writers of Canada and has received their prestigious Peter McKillen Award. He has also won The Record's Katie Award for Outstanding Customer Service. And he works with the scholarship program of the Bassmasters Kasting for Kids.

Through the Lackenbauer family of Kitchener he was central to establishing the Grand River Conservation Foundation's Eddie Lackenbauer Fund.

Major donors include individual corporations and the Bob Izumi Fishing Forever Foundation. This fund gets kids out to fishing camps who might not otherwise have the opportunity to do so. He regards the Lackenbauer Fund as one of the highlights of his career.

Bill is an outdoorsman in the best sense of the word. And his columns support the preservation efforts of the angling and hunting communities who

have a close connection to the natural world. His readers have come to appreciate his strong opinions in this area.

One of his deep concerns is about the quality of life in the Grand River watershed. As the central part of the watershed urbanizes, he believes that many people are losing contact with the natural world. In losing this contact, some are losing awareness of the importance of the connection between our watershed and human health. Through his column and his work he hopes to help people make this connection. After all, sustaining this connection is for our children and our future.

Lower Grand River Trust: living history

The Lower Grand River Land Trust carries out good works across the southern reaches of the watershed.

The trust supports a range of stewardship programs to help landowners preserve ecologically significant land such as a rare siew forest, the largest in the Grand River watershed.

Betsy Smith is the president of the

Lower Grand River Land Trust and Marilynn Havelka is the Chief Administrative Office of Ruthven Park.

They're the leaders of a team undertaking a big challenge: preserving Ruthven Park and its magnificent mansion. Ruthven overlooks the Grand River near Cayuga. The 1,600-acre site is a reminder of the days when trade and commerce thrived on the Grand River.

The Thompson family obtained land along the river in 1832 and built a canal and lock, gristmill, and sawmill in the thriving village of Indiana.

The Thompsons built Ruthven in a fine example of Greek Revival style, between 1845 and 1847.

By 1850 more than 100 steamships were plying the Grand River, bringing prosperity to the developing region.

Some steamers made round trips between Brantford and Buffalo, N.Y.

However, during the 1850s railways were built across southern Ontario. Trains could run in any weather and regardless of flow conditions on the river. The success of the railways broke the economic back of the Grand River Navigation Company and by 1861 the



Betsy Smith is president of the Lower Grand River Land Trust, which has undertaken efforts to conserve the human and natural heritage of the southern Grand.

company was bankrupt.

Today, the locks, canals and Grand River paddle steamers are another distant piece of the history of the Grand.

Indiana is gone, recalled by one remaining building and cemetery stones that the Lower Grand River Land Trust is uncovering.

But the Ruthven mansion remains and is being preserved and has been designated a National Historic Site.

In 1993 the last member of the Thompson family, the late Marion Hartney, donated Ruthven Park to the Lower Grand River Land Trust.

The trust's goal is to first conserve the estate and the mansion.

For decades, features in many of the 36 rooms have remained unchanged. Many features are preserved as if the last occupants had just left the mansion.

The conservation of the Thompson family history preserves settlement history, military history, development history and parliamentary history.

That this history is both local and national, and that it is all located under one roof is astonishing.

Betsy Smith and the members of the Land Trust will ensure that it is conserved for future generations on the banks of the Lower Grand River.



Building local capacity to provide clean water

By Janet Ivey
Guelph Water Management Group

Local organizations, primarily conservation authorities and municipalities, should play key roles in protecting our drinking water supplies. That's the recommendation of Justice O'Connor in Part 2 of his report from the Walkerton Inquiry.

O'Connor suggests that conservation

The website of the Guelph Water Management Group at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/gwmg/index.html> contains information about several rivers, including the Grand, being studied by the group.

authorities help to prepare watershed-wide drinking water source protection plans, and municipalities integrate local development planning decisions with those plans.

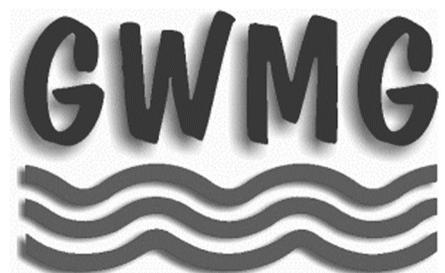
These recommendations are the latest in a series encouraging local agencies to take a stronger role in water management. The involvement of conservation authorities in a provincial groundwater monitoring network, and the new drinking water regulations affecting public water system owners and operators, are other recent examples of the increasing roles of local organizations.

Source water protection was identified by O'Connor as a crucial barrier to water contamination. The purpose is to prevent contamination of groundwater and surface waters that are current or future sources of drinking water. Source water protection usually involves managing land use to reduce the risk of releases of pollutants in sensitive or vulnerable areas. Water quality can be affected both by historical (e.g., old industrial sites) and current urban and rural land uses. In the Grand River watershed, the Grand River Conservation Authority and local municipalities have already taken steps to protect our source waters.

Unfortunately, not all local organizations and communities are equally capable of playing a larger role. This was demonstrated tragically in Walkerton where seven people died and 2,300 became ill due to E. coli contamination of the water supply. This tragedy highlights the fact that it is largely unknown to what extent local level organizations will be able to respond to the challenges of providing clean water.

The Guelph Water Management Group, in partnership with researchers from four Canadian universities, is conducting research into building local capacity to provide clean water in four Canadian study areas: the Grand River and Maitland River watersheds in Ontario, the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia, and the Oldman River watershed in Alberta.

This project has three main objectives:



- Establish a database of existing and planned mechanisms for watershed management for each of the four study areas.
- Evaluate factors that facilitate or constrain local capacity to provide clean water in the four watersheds.
- Determine specific capacity building strategies within each watershed, and identify general lessons for capacity building applicable to smaller communities across Canada.

As part of the first project objective, web-based watershed databases for each study area have been created. The databases are intended for a wide audience - anyone interested in learning about water issues and management in the Grand River basin and other areas.

The Grand River website summarizes characteristics of the natural and human communities of the watershed, current water-related issues, stakeholder activities, and the institutional arrangements (legislation, policies, and programs) for managing water resources.

For anyone interested in comparing how we manage water in the Grand watershed with other jurisdictions, the databases are set up to easily flip between study areas in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Alberta. The reports can be viewed at http://www.uoguelph.ca/gwmg/wcp_home/index.htm

This project is funded by the Canadian Water Network, under the federal Networks of Centres of Excellence initiative. Our project partners include researchers from the universities of Guelph, Waterloo, Acadia, and Lethbridge, and representatives from local municipalities and watershed organizations, including the Grand River Conservation Authority.

The Guelph Water Management Group is based in the Geography Department at the University of Guelph. The group conducts research on local water management; key interests include protecting drinking water sources, drought management, and the impacts of climate change on water resources. For more information about the Group,

please visit our website at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/gwmg>.

A boost for renewable energy

By Michael Morgan
Solar Technology Education Project
University of Waterloo

The Solar Technology Education Project (STEP) is a non-profit group dedicated to the educational promotion of renewable energy resources. The group, which is comprised of University of Waterloo students, faculty, and volunteers, is working to bring a grid-connected array of solar panels to the main University of Waterloo campus for Spring 2003.

The 25-panel array, expandable to 50 panels, will produce energy equivalent to two-thirds of that used by an average home per year. The energy output will be two to four kilowatts, eliminating upwards of 1,000 kilograms of carbon dioxide emissions annually.

The solar array will hold many benefits for both the university and the community by increasing the awareness of climate change issues and renewable energy sources. The project will include the examination of real-time output data, provided online, that can be integrated in educational programs. This will allow an analysis of the energy efficiency, environmental benefits of the system and effectiveness of large-scale solar energy systems in the Waterloo region.

There is also the possibility of integrating the solar panel display into children's programs, held on campus during the summer months.

As more people learn about sustainable energy, and as new products and funding become available, the project can be taken into future stages that further promote environmentally-friendly energy alternatives.

The government has already recognized the significance of solar energy in the Kitchener-Waterloo area with a grant of \$1 million to a project headed by

local ARISE Technologies Corporation to construct homes with solar energy systems. ARISE is a technical partner of STEP. Since its formation in January 2002 both Waterloo Mayor Lynne Woolstencroft and University President David Johnston have also actively supported STEP.

STEP is in the process of finalizing sponsorship from local companies and community groups. The group hoped to raise \$25,000 in February. The planning and design phases are scheduled through March including a final decision on the location of the array. The installation should occur in April.

With the new demands being placed on the country to control climate change, renewable energies will play an important role in our future. Through efforts such as those made by STEP, a wider expanse of the general population will learn about renewable energies, and be encouraged to implement alternative energy sources such as solar technology.

For further information and upcoming events organized by STEP please see the website at: www.step.uwaterloo.ca or contact STEP director Jeff DeLoyde at jdloyde@gmail.com



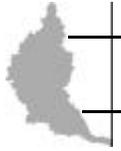
NOW AVAILABLE

Landscape Guide for the Grand

The Heritage Resources Centre has released "The Grand River Watershed: A Heritage Landscape Guide," an introduction to the natural and cultural heritage of the watershed. Natural heritage includes the geology, hydrology, landforms, and soils of the area as well as climate, plant and animal life. Cultural heritage includes the long history and current status of First Nations, as well as the invasion and eventual settlement by French, Loyalists, Mennonite, Scots, Irish and other folk of European origin.

The guide is intended to bring information from different fields of knowl-

edge and experience together, to tell the story of the whole landscape. The Guide sells for \$10.00 and is available from the Heritage Resources Centre, University of Waterloo. Phone (519) 888-4567 ext. 2072 Fax (519) 746-2031 or E-mail: hrc@fes.uwaterloo.ca



MILESTONES

Milestones are progress or products of *The Grand Strategy* Joint Work Plan.

Grand Renewals

More than 180 people gathered at the Sixth Annual Heritage Day Workshop and Celebration at the Guelph Youth Music Centre to learn more about the cultural landscapes of the Grand and the role that adaptive re-use plays in maintaining these distinctive landscapes.

In his keynote address, Dr. Gordon Nelson stressed that the story of the evolution of the land, the changing forests and wildlife, and the people who have lived in the Grand River watershed is manifest in the heritage features and landscapes that exist today.

General similarities in natural and cultural history and landscape character exist and can be grouped into eight major landscapes including: Luther Country; Guelph Country; Conestogo Country; Waterloo-Paris Country; Brantford Country; Six Nations Country; Caledonia-Cayuga Country and Dunnville Country.

Many of these landscapes are being threatened by construction, gravel mining, urbanization, and other development actions of our day. Gordon believes that when people understand and appreciate the long history and special qualities of these landscapes, they will be more supportive of their conservation and stewardship. While development will continue, it should do so in ways that are sensitive to the need to conserve significant features of the long natural and cultural heritage of the river. To assist, the



The former Riverside Silk Mills in Cambridge is to be the new home of the University of Waterloo School of Architecture.

Heritage Resources Centre, University of Waterloo, has developed the first edition of a "Heritage Landscape Guide for the Grand River Watershed".

Dr. Gilbert Stelter, historian and Professor Emeritus, University of Guelph followed with a fascinating look at adaptive reuse in the city. Adaptive reuse refers to the rehabilitation and reuse of historic properties. It presents an exciting opportunity for innovative design that combines contemporary elements with historic restoration. The goal is a revitalized historic property, ready to serve the needs of future generations while telling the story of past generations.

In Gilbert's mind, change is natural and necessary adaptive reuse helps to maintain a community's cultural continuity. Gilbert pointed out that two landmark decisions were made in Guelph which marked a major step in preserving the downtown core. These included the Wellington Hotel in the late 1970s and the Cutten Block in the early 1980s.

Variety of uses

In his slide presentation, Gilbert pointed out the many building that have been retained and converted to a variety of uses. He pointed out that the challenges ahead include the redevelopment of the Memorial Gardens into a Civic Administration Centre while maintaining the integrity and symbolic value of the Ontario Provincial Winter Fair building which was covered up during the build-

ing of the Memorial Gardens.

Val Harrison from Guelph Museums talked about the excitement and wonder that children express when the stories about the people who lived or worked in historic buildings are told. The stories are what brings the structure to life for not only children but adults as well. There is a real need to ensure that the stories are told.

Rick Haldenby from the University of Waterloo School of Architecture kicked off the afternoon session. From experiences in Europe and elsewhere, Rick indicated that core areas in mid-sized cities require new uses in order to maintain their health and position in the urban landscape. These uses are predominantly culture, education, public administration, tourism and residential with some specialized commercial office and retail.

The relocation of the University's School of Architecture to Cambridge's downtown historic Riverside Silk Mills on the banks of the Grand River will have a very positive effect, bringing faculty members, staff and students to the core; attracting millions of dollars in research funding; bringing a landmark building back to life; enlivening public space, collaborating with other cultural and educational institutions and stimulating the housing and retail sectors. It will also put Cambridge on the map as a centre of academic and design excellence.

Case studies of adaptive reuse in vari-

ous watershed communities from a variety of perspectives followed. Speakers included Tom Lammer, developer; Lloyd Grinham, architect; Jean Haalboom, Waterloo regional councillor, and Charles Simon, planner and architect. The lessons learned from these case studies can be summarized as follows:



Rick Haldenby

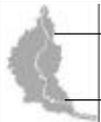
- Sometimes municipal planning policies and by-laws act as barriers to creativity and innovation around adaptive reuse. The road to adaptive

reuse is not easy for developers.

- Volunteers with a “vision” are essential to advance political and community support and gather needed resources.
- Community support is frequently key to successful projects in adaptive reuse (i.e. Guelph Youth Music Centre; Waterloo County Gaol and Governor’s House). This support can be either financial or “hands on” or both.
- The story behind the historic site or building needs to be shared and promoted within the community.
- Adaptive reuse can also include state-of-the-art technologies (i.e. solar heating and cooling).

- The needs and interests of the owner must be considered in designing appropriate facilities.
- The project manager must be knowledgeable and empathetic.
- Adaptive reuse helps to maintain a community’s identity and sense of place.

This event was sponsored by the City of Guelph and the Grand River Conservation Authority and organized by a local arrangements committee representing Guelph Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC), Guelph Visitor and Convention Services, Guelph Museums, Ministry of Culture, City of Guelph and the Grand River Conservation Authority.



The Grand Strategy Calendar

Green Roof Training Workshop, April 9. Learn about developing a “green roof” -- a layer of vegetation on a flat or slightly sloping rooftop -- at this workshop at the Waterloo Regional Community Health Department, 99 Regina St. South, Waterloo. The workshop will be of interest to architects, planners, engineers, horticulturalists and building owners who can discuss how “green roof” ideas could be developed in the Waterloo Region. For details contact Karen Moyer, Environmental Services, City of Waterloo, 519-747-8609

Brantford Tree Festival, Saturday April 26. Enjoy the 10th Annual Tree Festival, a community event offering fun and entertainment. Participants will help plant approximately 400 trees and shrubs at the new park on Donegal Drive, off Shellard Lane, Brantford. For more information, call Brantford Parks and Recreation at 519-756-1500

Sunoco Earth Day, Saturday, April 26. From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Rim Park SportsPlex in Waterloo. Entertainment, nature crafts and activities, displays, bird box building. About 1,000 trees and shrubs will be planted. Events partners are Sunoco and the Suncor Foundation, Earth Day Canada, GRCA, City of Waterloo, Home Depot and 10,000 Trees.

Parks Research Forum of Ontario, May 8-10. A two-day conference on watershed planning, preservation of natural areas and conservation. London, Ont. at the University of Western Ontario. For information is available at the PRFO web site at www.prfo.ca

Trails Workshop: Trail Links for Waterloo-Wellington-Dufferin. May 23. A meeting for trail groups, politicians, municipal staff and health promoters to explore the opportunities for trail development in the watershed. To be held at the GRCA office, 400 Clyde Rd., Cambridge. For information contact Julie Gillespie at (519) 836-7602, Ext. 222. E-mail jgillespie@wrddhc.on.ca.

About this newsletter

This newsletter is produced as a communications tool by the Grand River Conservation Authority on behalf of the partners in The Grand Strategy. This newsletter can be seen on the Internet at www.grandriver.ca

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Newsletter submissions must be made by the 15th of the month prior to publication and may be subject to editing for length or style. Tax deductible donations and sponsorships toward the cost of producing this newsletter are always welcome.

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