



GRAND RIVER  
CONSERVATION  
AUTHORITY  
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# Lines on the landscape

## By showing landowners the map lines marking natural areas, GRCA planners help protect lives and property

By Janet Baine  
GRCA Communications Specialist

Ken Rosin may not know it, but what he does around the wetlands on his property in Amaranth Township, in the northern headwaters of the Grand River, can help or hurt people downstream.

Wetlands like those on Rosin's property play an important role in storing water and filtering impurities out of it, so it could be that the water that seeps out of his wetlands may eventually show up in a tap in Kitchener or Brantford.

That's one reason why it's important to protect these and

the remaining wetlands in the Grand River watershed.

One way to do that is through regulations on land use that are administered by the Grand River Conservation Authority. The regulations, which show up as lines on watershed maps, identify natural areas that need to be protected.

When people plan a new house or garage for their land, or think about subdivision plans and severances, they think mostly about what they or future owners of the property will want. They may not be aware that their plans could impact the natural environment or result in water problems on another property or even in

another community. They also aren't usually aware that development in the wrong area can increase the possibility of flood damages.

It's important that people are aware of it, though. When Hurricane Hazel struck Ontario in 1954 it killed 81 people and washed away whole neighborhoods of houses built in flood-prone river valleys in Toronto. After that storm it became clear that one of the best ways to prevent future devastation would be to keep people from building new houses in flood-prone areas. Flood lines were mapped in many places across the province and regulations were developed



Amaranth Township landowner Ken Rosin and GRCA planner Liz Yerex examine the wetlands on Rosin's property. GRCA photo by Janet Baine

to restrict building in those areas.

The many floods in Ontario since then, including the 1974 Grand River flood, have shown the value of the regulations.

Buildings located in a floodplain face an obvious risk. Less obvious is the impact that they

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Along the Grand

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The green roof project at Laurel Creek Nature Centre was a natural for Toyota.

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### THE GRAND RIVER

A Canadian Heritage River



## The GRCA

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# A Message FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND THE CAO



Environment" is a simple word that is used to describe a complex web of relationships – the links that connect rivers, forests, moraines, wetlands and the rest of our landscape as well as the living things that inhabit them.

The complexity of the subject matter means that no one person, no one group, no one agency can do all of the things that must be done to protect and enhance the natural features of the Grand River watershed.

That's why partnerships are such a fundamental part of the way we carry out our important responsibilities. We know that the job will only be done if it involves all levels of government, community groups, business and industry, farmers, non-governmental agencies and, most importantly, the residents of the watershed.

In this issue of the Grand you'll find information on some of the work we have been doing with our partners.

The article on land use and regulations highlights the common interest of the GRCA and its member municipalities in protecting the lives and property of watershed residents.

The commitment of watershed residents, community groups and residents to a better environment is illustrated in the article on the project to install a new green roof at our Laurel Creek Nature Centre.

The story on Grand River Country points to a partnership of the GRCA and local tourism agencies to sell the wonders of the Grand to local audiences as well as visitors from farther afield.

And last, but not least, is the information on our annual budget, which details – in dollars and cents – the commitment many of our partners are making to this work.

This year our total expenditures will be \$29 million. That's money that will be spent reducing flood damages, improving water quality, ensuring an adequate water supply, protecting natural areas, providing environmental education, undertaking watershed planning and operating our conservation areas.

But of that amount, just one-third comes from the 950,000 residents of the watershed through their property taxes or water bills, which means their average, per capita contribution is only \$8.54 a person.

Close to 45 per cent of our income comes from money we raise ourselves, through camping fees, hydroelectricity genera-

tion, planning fees, donations from the Grand River Conservation Foundation and other sources.

Almost all of the rest – about 23 per cent of our revenue – comes from the senior levels of government, primarily the provincial government.

So, in a very real sense, the GRCA is a locally-administered, locally-financed agency dedicated to finding local solutions to the issues facing our watershed.

There was a time when the provincial contribution to the work of conservation authorities was much higher – about 50 per cent of the budget. But conservation authorities, like many other agencies, went through a period when provincial cut-backs forced us to look elsewhere for revenue. At the GRCA we're proud that we were able to do that and maintain our environmental projects even as we broadened our sources of financial support.

In recent years, the province has increased its support for our work, notably with grants for maintenance of our critical dams and dikes, as well as money for the drinking water source protection program. It's a welcome strengthening of this important partnership.

The complexity of it all – the work we do, our network of partnerships, our varied sources of money – has a beneficial impact on the way we approach our tasks. We know that to be successful we must understand the needs of our watershed and its residents and work hard to meet them. It's not an easy job, but it is a challenging and exciting one.



*Alan Dale*  
**Alan Dale**  
Chairman



*Paul Emerson*  
**Paul Emerson**  
Chief Administrative Officer

## WHO SPEAKS FOR YOU?

The municipality where you live appoints one or more representatives to the GRCA board to oversee the budget and activities of the conservation authority.

They speak on your behalf at the GRCA.

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

**Townships of Wellington North and Mapleton:** 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

**Regional Municipality of Waterloo:** (Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich) – Jane Brewer, Kim Denouden, Jean Haalboom, Ross Kelterborn, Claudette Millar, Jane Mitchell (GRCA 1st vice-chair), Wayne Roth, Jake Smola, Bill Strauss, Sean Strickland

**Town of North Perth, Township of Perth East:** George Wicke

**Regional Municipality of Halton:** (Halton Hills and Milton) – Barry Lee

**City of Hamilton:** Anna Kramer

**County of Oxford:** (Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra-Tavistock, Norwich) – Alan Dale (GRCA chair)

**City of Brantford:** Robert Hillier, Vic Prendergast (GRCA 2nd vice-chair)

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

**Haldimand and Norfolk counties:** Lorne Boyko, Craig Grice

# Regulations protect lives and property

*Continued from Page 1*

have on other areas. A building or fill material takes up space that could be filled with water during a flood, sometimes called storage space. Lose too much storage space, and flood peaks become higher, putting more people and properties at risk.

When wetlands, waterways and low-lying areas are replaced by pavement, rooftops, patios and concrete, water runs off the land even faster, increasing the risk of flooding and erosion elsewhere. It can also pose a risk to water quality since water running off the land will carry with it whatever was sitting on the ground.

## Understand connections

It's the GRCA's job to understand the way these issues are connected, and to ensure that the work of one person doesn't inadvertently hurt another.

The GRCA's regulations, which are approved by the Ontario government, govern about 31 per cent of the land area of the watershed. Regulated areas include river and stream valleys, the Lake Erie shoreline, wetlands, other hazardous land and watercourses and the area

near each of these. The regulated areas include natural hazards such as flood plains, unstable soils and erosion prone areas.

Prior to 2006, the amount of regulated land was less. That year a new regulation was adopted as part of a province-wide program to ensure that all conservation authorities base their decisions on the same set of rules. The regulations goes by the unwieldy name "Regulation of Development, Interference with

measure. In the long run, it is cheaper – and safer — to keep new buildings out of risky areas than to try to protect them with millions of dollars worth of dykes, dams, reservoirs and other infrastructure.

Changes that fall within the Ontario Planning Act (such as rezoning, variances, severances and other matters) need to be approved by the municipality. The GRCA staff work closely with municipalities to review plans and ensure the regulated areas are reflected in official plans, zoning bylaws and other documents to make the process simpler for property owners.

Ken Rosin, whose property is in the headwaters of the Grand River and includes provincially significant wetlands, wanted to sever his land into three lots. Working his way through the planning process caused him some headaches at first.

The municipality advised him to talk to the GRCA. Planner Liz Yerex worked with him to sort through the planning and permit process and draw lot lines that would allow a building on each lot, but which would protect the wetlands. The severances were soon approved by the municipality.

Rosin wrote an e-mail to Yerex afterwards saying that without her help, "I doubt we would have gotten the severance approval — you are a proactive person and I applaud you for it."

## Offer advice

Yerex and the six other planners strive to meet the goals of the property owner by offering more than advice on his application. She says planners are the front line people who can put landowners in touch with other programs and people.

Now that the severance applications have been approved, Rosin can move on to the next step of selling the lots or building on them. But before building takes place, a GRCA permit will

'We want to make sure development is appropriate.'



– GRCA Planner Liz Yerex

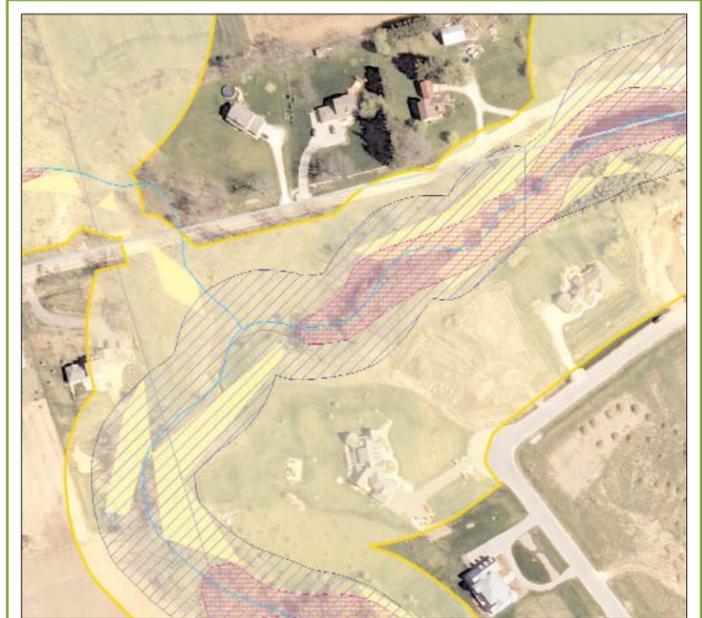
Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses (Ontario Regulation 150/06)."

The increase in coverage accounts for a big jump in the number of permits issued by the GRCA: 249 in 2005 and 690 in 2007.

However, just because an area is regulated doesn't mean that construction is forbidden, but it does mean that a landowner will need a permit from the GRCA before work can start. The GRCA will follow its policies — which were updated on January 1 — to ensure that the construction project doesn't harm the natural area or increase the risk to people and property.

High population growth in the Grand River watershed, combined with the uncertainty of climate change means it's more important than ever to be careful around natural areas.

Avoiding new development in regulated areas is a preventative



You can download a map like this showing the regulated areas on your property. The yellow shaded areas are regulated, while other colours and patterns represent wetlands, slopes and other natural hazard zones.

## Is your land affected?

### Here's how to find out

About 31 per cent of the Grand River watershed comes under the GRCA's regulation. Anyone contemplating activity in the regulated area needs to consult with the GRCA first. If work is allowed to proceed, the landowner will need a GRCA permit.

Maps showing the regulated area are available on the GRCA website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)

Look for the "Planning & regulations" section and click on "Map your property."

Or, you can go directly to the page by setting your browser to [www.grandriver.ca/propertymaps](http://www.grandriver.ca/propertymaps)

Instructions on how to zero

in on your property and print a map showing regulated lands are available on the website.

Once you've done this research, contact the GRCA planning department to discuss your plans. They will give you advice on how best to proceed, saving you time and possibly money.

The provincial regulation, the GRCA policies and guidelines, the application and fees are all posted in the planning section of the GRCA's website.

Permit applications are commented on by GRCA planning staff and then sent to the GRCA board with a recommendation. The board meets twice a month and makes the final decision.

be necessary.

"I tell people we don't want to stop development, we want to make sure it is appropriate and that it meets all the current regulations to keep the watershed healthy," Yerex says. "It can be a complicated process and we do our best to help people through it."

Things don't always go smoothly for a landowner and a

resource planner. The Planning Act, the GRCA regulation and GRCA policies to administer this regulation sometimes prevent people from building where they want or in the way that they want. If it is a big project or one near a natural area, the landowner may have to hire a consultant for studies such as hydrology or wetland impact, so the process can be complex and take time.

## By the numbers

- Structures in the floodplain: 7,592
- Buildings in the floodplain: 1,290
- Wetlands removed from the watershed: 65%
- Amount of land in urban areas: 3%
- Anticipated population growth over 25 years: 57%
- Permit applications in 2005: 247
- Permit applications in 2007: 690
- Portion of the watershed regulated: 31%



# It takes a lot of work to realize the goal of healthy watershed

The GRCA's goal is to manage a healthy and sustainable natural environment in the Grand River watershed.

This is a complex job with many interconnected parts. To organize the work, the GRCA has broken its activities into seven broad categories. They all fit together and often overlap.

Here are some highlights from these areas for 2007.

## 1. Reduce flood damages

- The flood operations centre was active in March 2007 when it issued five flood messages and two watershed conditions bulletins for the communities of New Hamburg and Ayr.

- The GRCA worked with Kitchener, Woolwich and Mapleton on emergency exercises to test their municipal flood emergency plans.

- GRCA staff tested the emergency plan for Shand Dam through an exercise with Wellington County and Centre Wellington Township.

- Paper maps were converted to digital format to help municipalities with their flood emergency plans.

## 2. Improve water quality

- A new water quality and benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring program was undertaken in partnership with the Region of Waterloo in the central Grand River and lower Speed River.

- The Surface Water Quality Monitoring Network, a joint program with the Ministry of Environment, was optimized and the number of sites increased from 29 to 37.

- A sampling program was started on the Nith River to collect more detailed information about river water quality before and after municipal wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

- Equipment was upgraded in the real-time water quality monitoring stations and a new software program is helping with data management and quality control.

- The Rural Water Quality Program gave out more than \$868,000 in grants to support 276 projects to protect water on farms across the Grand River watershed.

Most of the projects were completed in Waterloo Region, Wellington County, Oxford County and Brant County where the program is funded by the local municipalities.

- A new \$50,000 fund in the northern part of the Grand River watershed was set up to help farmers and rural landowners pay for projects that protect water quality.

## 3. Protect natural areas

- Ontario Power Generation agreed to spend \$260,000 to plant 136,000 trees on 152 hectares at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

- The GRCA acquired 53 hectares of land in the Dunnville Marsh, 40 hectares in the Luther Marsh and 39 hectares of the Greenfield Swamp in North Dumfries Township.

- Eight hectares of farm fields at Dunnville Marsh were restored to natural habitat.



Stephanie Genge, a GRCA co-op student, helps with a study of benthic invertebrates – insects and other creatures living in water.



The bed of the Grand River near Inverhaugh, was reshaped to improve both fish habitat and water quality as part of the Grand River Structural Enhancement Project.

- Prescribed burns took place at F. W. R. Dixon Wilderness Area and two islands at Luther Marsh to restore grassland habitat.

- More than 15,000 trees were planted on GRCA land and another 72,000 trees were planted on private land during 2007. The Burford Tree Nursery produced 103,000 trees.

- After ten years of planning, the first of eight in-river projects to restore fish habitat took place at Inverhaugh as part of the Grand River Structural Enhancement Project.

## 4. Ensure secure water supply

- The year was extremely dry and by September, water users throughout the Grand River watershed were asked by the Grand River Low Water Response Team to cut their water use by 20 per cent.

- Also due to dry conditions, the GRCA reduced the amount of water it released from the reservoirs during the fall by 15 per cent in order to ensure there would be enough water in the reservoirs to meet low flow augmentation needs through the winter.

- The GRCA completed two phases of a three-year study of an ancient bedrock valley which runs from Lake Ontario toward Lake Huron underneath the central Grand River watershed to see if it could be a municipal water source.

- Dam management projects included rebuilding the gate hoist building at Conestogo Dam, evaluation and design of the stilling basin at Conestogo Dam and

improvements to the gate motor controls for the Shand Dam.

## 5. Support watershed planning

- Municipalities and landowners received advice from the GRCA on ways to include environmental protection in land use plans and development applications.

- New GRCA policies to administer development, interference with wetlands and alterations to shorelines and watercourses were developed to provide the requirements for permit applications.

- Guidelines for Erosion and Sediment Control were released by the conservation authorities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe in December 2006 and 100 people attended a workshop about this.

- The Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee was formed and held its first meeting in December under Chair Craig Ashbaugh. A website and e-newsletter for this was also launched.

- Work on the Alder Creek Watershed Study and Upper Strasburg Creek Subwatershed Plan was completed.

## 6. Environmental education

- The \$2.2 million Living Classroom – Campaign for Outdoor Education was completed in June 2007 and a business plan for marketing all five nature centres was developed.

- More than 35,000 school children in the Grand River watershed received a 12-page river and dam safety booklet.



■ Tree planting, games and displays on environmental themes were all part of Sunoco Earth Day at RIM Park, Waterloo.

■ About 400 people took part in the Seventh Grand River Water Forum which had a focus on Water: Global Realities – Local Solutions.

■ The 11th Heritage Day Workshop in Waterloo focused on the history of the City of Waterloo and helped mark its 150th anniversary.

■ The GRCA is continuing on the road to educating people about sustainability by featuring solar and wind energy at the Taquanyah Nature Centre as well as Apps' Mill Nature Centre near Brantford.

■ 4,000 students and 500 volunteers participated in the Waterloo Wellington Children's Groundwater Festival and 1,500 students and 300 volunteers participated in the Brantford Brant Children's Water Festival.

■ The 25th anniversary of the Guelph Lake Nature Centre was celebrated in June.

## 7. Outdoor recreation

■ Over a million visits were made to the GRCA's 12 conservation areas generating \$5.7 million in user fees.

■ The GRCA worked with Grand River Country to develop four driving tours of the watershed, with a particular focus on the many old mills that dot the landscape.

■ Warning buoys were installed upstream of six dams on the Grand and Speed rivers to provide additional notice to canoeists and kayakers to stay away from the dams.

■ Paddling the Grand River, a 96-page guide to canoeing and kayaking was published by James Lorimer and Co. of Toronto.

■ The GRCA and tenants who own about 700 cottages at Belwood and Conestogo lakes settled a long-standing legal dispute and agreed on terms of new leases.



Children learn about water conservation at the Brantford-Brant Children's Water Festival, one of two festivals held in the watershed each year.

# GRCA budget includes new programs to protect environment

The 2008 budget for the GRCA calls for expenditures of \$29.1 million that includes money for new projects to protect water quality, learn more about water supplies, enhance natural areas and upgrade its hydro-generating capacity.

The budget was approved by the GRCA board at its annual meeting in Cambridge on Feb. 29.

Although the budget is up about \$5.7 million from last year, most of the increase is due to special one-time projects that are being covered with grants from the province, municipalities or other sources.

The cost to the 950,000 watershed residents for their share of the GRCA budget this year will be \$8.54 a person.

Budget expenditures can be broken down into three broad categories: special projects, the base (or operating) budget and conservation area operations.

### Special projects: \$5.4 million

Spending on special projects this year is up considerably from the \$1.7 million budgeted in 2007. Some of the projects this year include:

■ \$1.8 million for studies on water supplies in Waterloo Region and the City of Guelph, paid for by a grant from the province under the Clean Water Act.

■ \$550,000 from the Ontario government to set up a fund that provides grants to landowners who take action to protect water quality around municipal wells and surface water intakes under the Clean Water Act.

■ \$1 million for a new hydro-electric turbine at Shand Dam near Fergus to replace the old one which failed in 2006. The money for the project will be borrowed from GRCA reserve accounts and then repaid from profits earned on electricity sales which will amount to more than \$200,000 a year when the turbine is fully operational.

■ \$67,000 for water quality studies on the Nith and Grand rivers covered by grants from the Region of Waterloo.

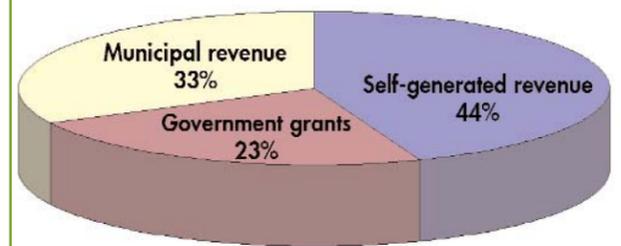
■ \$150,000 to complete the installation of a "green roof" at the Laurel Creek Nature Centre. Private sector donations to the Grand River Conservation Foundation are covering most of the total project cost of \$300,000.

■ \$80,000 for tree planting and other work at the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, offset by a grant from Ontario Power Generation.

### Base budget: \$18.1 million

The base budget, which covers ongoing operations and programs, totals \$18.1 million, an increase of \$1.6 million from the budgeted amount in 2007. That pays for the GRCA's work to prevent flooding, improve water quality, protect water supplies, provide environmental educa-

## GRCA revenue sources



## Where your money goes

The municipalities of the Grand River watershed contribute about 33 per cent of GRCA revenues. The average cost per person for all watershed residents is about \$8.54 a year.

Here's how it will be spent in 2008:

| <u>\$8.54 used for:</u>                         | <u>Your cost in 2008:</u> |
|---|---------------------------|
| ✓ Watershed studies                             | \$0.14                    |
| ✓ Resource inventory, environmental monitoring  | \$1.38                    |
| ✓ Flood forecasting & warning                   | \$0.63                    |
| ✓ Flood & erosion control structures            | \$1.56                    |
| ✓ Floodplain regulation                         | \$0.48                    |
| ✓ Resource management support cost              | \$0.31                    |
| ✓ Municipal plan input & review                 | \$0.19                    |
| ✓ Private land tree planting, forestry          | \$0.45                    |
| ✓ Soil & water conservation, stream restoration | \$0.48                    |
| ✓ Conservation information                      | \$0.72                    |
| ✓ Conservation land property taxes              | \$0.16                    |
| ✓ Administration/head office facilities         | \$2.04                    |

The per person levy was calculated by dividing the portion of the GRCA's total general municipal levy of \$8,110,000 by the estimated number of residents (950,000) in the Grand River watershed. The \$8.54 was then applied to the net cost of the various GRCA program areas that are partially funded by municipalities.

tion, provide environmental planning advice to municipalities and landowners, operate trails, and manage forests, wetlands and other sensitive environmental lands.

Included in this part of the budget is the cost of installing two new water quality gauges on the Grand River. About \$140,000 will be spent on a gauge at Victoria Street in Kitchener, half of which is being paid by the Region of Waterloo. The GRCA is also spending \$160,000 on a water quality station on the Grand at York in Haldimand County.

### Conservation area operations: \$5.6 million

The GRCA's 12 conservation areas are financially self-sufficient and record more than one million paid visits a year. Operating costs are expected to rise \$100,000 this year.





Canoeing at Rockwood Conservation Area.

## Enjoy all this – for less

### Price changes make it easier to have a summer of fun at GRCA parks

The 12 parks operated by the Grand River Conservation Authority have long had a reputation as providing some of the best outdoor recreation in the province.

And now it's easier – and cheaper – to enjoy all of the parks this year.

The GRCA operates one of the Ontario's largest networks of parks in some of the most striking natural areas in the province. With more than 2,500 campsites at eight conservation areas, the GRCA is the second largest operator of campgrounds in the province – second only to Ontario Parks.



Buy a Season Vehicle Pass for \$95 at any GRCA conservation area or online in the 'Store' section of our website at [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)

While some fees are rising this year in order to maintain and improve the quality of the parks, frequent visitors can take advantage of a drop in the price of a season pass and get more for less. Price changes will also benefit visitors to the pools at Brant and Byng Island conservation areas.

■ The price of a season vehicle pass has been cut to \$95, a saving of \$15 from last year. The pass allows unlimited access for all passengers to all 12 GRCA parks, throughout the season. For a family of four, the season pass will pay for itself in just seven visits. The season pass also includes one free night of camping (Sunday through Thursday).

■ At Byng Island (Dunnville) and Brant (Brantford) conservation areas, the adult admission fee rises to \$5 but also includes free admission to the park pool. The child rate remains unchanged and also includes free entry to the pool.

■ The price for an adult daily admission at other parks rises to \$4.25, an increase of 25 cents. The price of a child's admission (six to 14) remains the same as last year at \$2.50. Children five and under are free.

■ Campers can take advantage of the GRCA's new weekly camping fee, cov-

ering a five-night visit (Sunday to Thursday) at a reduction of 10 per cent from the regular overnight camping fee.

■ The charge for a serviced campsite rises by \$2 to \$34, while the price of an unserviced site remains \$27.



Fishing on the Speed River near Guelph Lake Conservation Area



## Find the Top 10 spots in Grand River Country

There's a lot to see and do in Grand River Country.

So much, in fact, that it's sometimes difficult to know where to begin.

But starting this summer, you'll be able to find the Top 10 Attractions in a variety of categories on the Grand River Country website at [www.grandrivercountry.com](http://www.grandrivercountry.com)

Grand River Country is a partnership of local tourism agencies and the GRCA who work together to promote the outdoor wonders, picturesque villages and exciting cities of the Grand River watershed.

The website already provides information on many of the activities available in the watershed, from hiking and canoeing to shopping. Coming this summer will be Top 10 lists to point you to Grand River Country's best restaurants, hotels and motels, museums and trails, among other features

Grand River Country has also welcomed two new members – The County of Brant and the Township of Wellington North – which both unique ways to enjoy the watershed.

They'll be joining the other members including the GRCA, Guelph-Wellington, Centre Wellington (Elora and Fergus), Brantford, Six Nations and New Credit, Haldimand, St. Jacobs Country and Woolwich Township

### Best of Brant

Brant County Tourism has produced a new brochure entitled Best of Brant Outdoors which is available at [www.county.brant.on.ca/forvisitors](http://www.county.brant.on.ca/forvisitors)

### Birding tours

The Township of Wellington North, which includes the towns of Arthur and Mount Forest has released a new birding map, pointing to the best bird-watching locations, including the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, where 242 species of birds have been recorded.

More information is available at [www.wellington-north.com/tourism.php](http://www.wellington-north.com/tourism.php) or in the "Birding" section of the GRCA website.



Download "Journey The Grand" from the GRCA website



# Watershed stewards recognized

Watershed Awards honours those who have helped improve the Grand

The GRCA has given out watershed awards each year since 1976 to recognize individuals, families, corporations and groups that have made a tangible contribution to the preservation and improvement of the Grand River watershed and its natural heritage.

The Honour Roll Award is given to those who have a sustained record of achievement over an extended period of time.

The Watershed Awards are presented for outstanding conservation and environmental work.

The 2007 awards were presented at a ceremony at the River Run Centre in Guelph in October.

## Honour Roll Award

### Betty Schneider, Waterloo

Betty Schneider of Waterloo received the Watershed Honour Roll Award for decades of work with the Grand River Conservation Authority and the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

Mrs. Schneider served on the GRCA board for 11 years beginning in 1966 and was its first woman member. In 1970 she became the first president of the Grand River Conservation Foundation, serving for five years.



Schneider

During those years she played a role in development of nature centres and the Memorial Tree program. She was a founder of the Grand Valley Trails Association, which has developed and maintains a 275-km trail along the Grand.

## Watershed Awards

Four Watershed Awards were presented to groups and individuals who have undertaken projects

to enhance the natural environment in the Grand River watershed.

### Ignatius Jesuit Centre, Guelph

The Ignatius Jesuit Centre, a part of Guelph for more than 150 years, manage a 600-acre property in the north end of the city, which includes 150 acres of wetlands.



Father Jim Profit, Ignatius Centre

They have worked hard to ensure this land is economically and environmentally sustainable and have opened gardens and trails to the public. They set up a community shared agriculture program so that 200 families can receive fresh organic produce each week during the growing season. The Ignatius Jesuits have undertaken an Old Growth Forest fundraising project to enhance the land and support other community projects

### Dennis Wendland, Kitchener

During a long career as an outdoor educator with the Waterloo Region District School Board, Dennis Wendland helped raise more than \$400,000 for the



Ron van Ooteghem (left) of Dufferin Aggregates and Larry Wilson of Capital Paving

board's outdoor education program. When he retired five years ago, he started working with the Evergreen

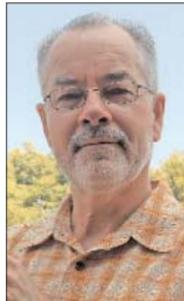
Foundation to promote schoolyard naturalization. So far he has helped 58 schools set up greening committees and to add trees and plants to otherwise barren playgrounds.

He's helped raise \$800,000 so schools can install gardens, trees, benches and naturalized area. His efforts have helped schools in Waterloo Region, Guelph, Brantford, Arthur and Stratford.

### Capital Paving and Dufferin Aggregates

These two companies and their employees have provided money, materials and support for projects to protect and enhance Mill Creek, which flows through Puslinch Township and the City of Cambridge.

The companies have been enthusiastic boosters of the Mill Creek Ranger program, which each summer hires teenagers to undertake restoration projects. In 2006 they undertook a big project that only took two days to carry out but two year to plan. They returned a section of the creek into the cold water stream that it once was.



Wendland



Betty Schneider of Waterloo receives a standing ovation from guests at the GRCA Watershed Awards gala after she was presented with an Honour Roll Award.

### Joe Kral, Guelph

Known as the "bird man of Guelph Lake," Kral has built and maintains more than 500 bird boxes for the Guelph Lake Conservation Area.

These serve as homes for black-capped chickadees, house wrens, tree swallows and especially bluebirds.

His boxes have housed an estimated 17,000 birds since 1995. In the spring of 2007 he retired from his job as a tool and die maker and now it is a little easier for him to spend the estimated 700 hours it takes each year for this special project.



Kral

## Speed River outlook named after dedicated fundraiser

Marilyn Murray of Guelph, a past-president of the Grand River Conservation Foundation and a leading philanthropist in the Guelph area, was recognized for her years of service by the naming of the look-out onto the Speed River just behind the River Run Centre in Guelph. It is now called the Marilyn Murray Riverview.



Murray

Murray, who received a GRCA Watershed Award last

year, was honoured for more than 20 years of service to the foundation as a board member

and president where she was involved in projects to protect natural areas and build trails.

She recently chaired The Living Classroom – Campaign for Outdoor Education which raised \$2.2 million to support

outdoor education programs for elementary school children.





# The GRAND RIVER CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

## Being 'earth-friendly' is natural for Toyota

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc. has long had a reputation as an eco-friendly company.

In fact, the Cambridge-based automobile maker was recognized this year as one of Canada's Most Earth-Friendly Employers by the publishers of Canada's Top 100 Employers.

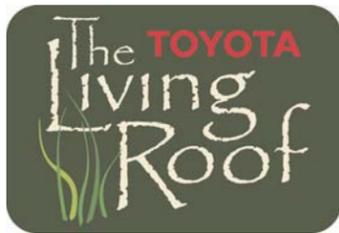
To borrow an old saying, global acclaim starts with local action.

And in the Grand River watershed, Toyota has earned its earth-friendly credentials on many occasions since it first set up shop here in the late 1980s.

The most recent example is the contribution the company made to a new Toyota Living Roof at the Laurel Creek Nature Centre in Waterloo.

The nature centre is one of five operated by the GRCA to provide hands-on, curriculum-based outdoor education programs to more than 50,000 children a year.

When the GRCA decided to replace the roof of the 30-year-old building, it naturally adopted



the idea of a "green" or "living" roof – a roof that incorporates grasses, plants and shrubs.

Green roofs have environmental benefits because they help clear the air, supply a habitat for wildlife and reduce the amount of runoff after rainfalls.

And in this case, the green roof has an added benefit as a new learning tool for the 15,000 students who visit the Laurel Creek Nature Centre each year.

Although the life expectancy of a green roof is longer than a conventional roof, they can be more expensive to install. So the GRCA turned to the Grand River Conservation Foundation for help.

The foundation began a fundraising campaign that attracted the support of a number of individual and corporate donors, notably Toyota. The drive was led by Ian Murdoch, owner and president of Waterloo Nissan,

with the support of a team of dedicated volunteers.

The project was an obvious fit for Toyota, which had already been an active partner of the GRCA and the foundation.

A few years ago, Toyota was the lead sponsor of a new nature centre at the Shade's Mills Conservation Area in Cambridge. It also supported the refurbishment of a well-used hiking trail through the area, now known as the Toyota Way Trail.

And every year the company holds an annual Earth Day event for its employees and their families at a GRCA conservation area.

"We are absolutely delighted that so many community partners have come together to make this effort a success," said Sara Wilbur, executive director of the foundation. "The Toyota Living Roof is about kids and the role they will play as our future environmental ambassadors."

Of course, to be a true teaching tool, it's important that



Murdoch



The Toyota Earth Day gave employees and their families a chance to plant trees at the Laurel Creek Conservation Area.

students be able to get a good look at the green roof. BMO Financial Group donated a Living Roof Observation Tower which provides a birds-eye view of the roof.

Inside the nature centre, students can look at thermometers which will show the roof's temperature.. Green roofs are much cooler which can help reduce the "heat island" effect that accompanies an old-style roof. Rain barrels on the ground will show how much rain is absorbed by the plants on the roof, which reduces the amount of runoff.

Children visiting the nature centre will learn to see green roofs as normal, not the exception, explained Wilbur.

"With such a high rate of growth projected in the Grand

River watershed, we will need new ways of making buildings more in harmony with our natural world and this is a great start to making that happen," she said.

In addition to being a teaching tool, the green roof has operational benefits for the GRCA. It reduces heat gain by 95 per cent in the summer, which reduces cooling costs by up to 25 per cent. During the winter, heat loss is lower, which means heating bills are smaller.

Construction of the new roof was completed early in the spring, just in time for the annual Toyota Earth Day on April 20, during which Toyota employees planted more than 300 trees in the Laurel Creek Conservation Area.



The green roof is installed at the Laurel Creek Nature Centre.

### Many supported Living Roof

Toyota's donation toward the \$300,000 project was a significant portion of the additional cost of turning a traditional roof into a green roof.

A long list of other donors contributed to the project including Ontario Ministry of Energy Community Conservation Initiatives Program, BMO Financial Group, the Kitchener & Waterloo Community

Foundation, CBM Aggregates, Conestogo-Rovers & Associates, The Good Foundation, Ron and Barbara Schlegel, TD Friends of the Environment – KW Chapter and Shell Environmental Fund.

CHYM-FM was the media sponsor and in-kind donations were provided by Nedlaw Living Roofs (formerly Roof Greening Systems) and Canadian General Tower.

### About the foundation

For more than 40 years, the Grand River Conservation Foundation has improved our quality of life by enriching the natural values of the Grand River watershed and encouraging people to enjoy, and to learn from, the great outdoors.

For more information:

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- e-mail [foundation@grandriver.ca](mailto:foundation@grandriver.ca)
- click on [www.grandriver.ca/foundation](http://www.grandriver.ca/foundation)

