



Exceptional Waters

Grand River : Paris to Brantford
Year 1 Update

(December 2003 - November 2004)

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Thank You to Our Supporters

The Exceptional Waters Community Advisory Committee wishes to acknowledge the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a two-year grant in support of the hiring of our community coordinator. This grant has made it possible to move objectives forward and to develop the marketing and scientific programs that will benefit all users of the Grand River Watershed and in particular the Exceptional Waters reach between Penman's Dam in Paris and the Cockshutt Bridge in Brantford.



The Exceptional Waters reach of the Grand is easily accessible by canoe. Despite flowing through a relatively populated area the river seems wild and free.

Year 1 Update

(December 2003- November 2004)

November 30, 2004 represents the completion of the first year of the two-year Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for an Exceptional

Waters Coordinator. This activity report will focus on the accomplishments of the Community Advisory Committee's objectives for the first year of activity.



Funding for this program has been provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation



Fly fishing with "Spey" type rods is very popular in the Exceptional Waters reach of the Grand River for anglers targeting rainbow trout or "steelhead".



Clean-up efforts at Cockshutt Bridge required truckloads of debris to be removed.

Access Points

The Community Advisory Committee was able to assist in the development of three previously identified and funded access points in the Exceptional Waters area of the river.

Bean Park

The Brant Waterways Foundation, with support from the County of Brant made funds available in 2004 for Bean Park to have its access upgraded. Vehicles and users now have a convenient and safe access while maintaining the natural park setting. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources funded a new kiosk.



The ramp at Brant Conservation Area is built to accommodate canoes and drift boats that use this portion of the river.

Brant Conservation Area

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources provided funding for the development of this access built by the GRCA in 2002. It included the installation of a kiosk. In 2004 the City of Brantford, as part of a major pipeline crossing and as compensation for the loss of use, added improvements to the access ramp.

Cockshutt Bridge

In 1982 Brantford's Riverfront Development Report identified several access points for development including Cockshutt Bridge. Planning for this access began in 2002 when monies became available. J.H. Cohoon Engineering provided the engineering. In 2003 a partnership of S.C. Johnson & Son, A Family Company and Brant Waterways Foundation provided in excess of \$110,000.00 to move forward with the construction. The work has created a much safer and environmentally friendly access to the river for non-motorized watercraft. It provides ample safe parking, a kiosk for educational signage and recognition of developing partners. The signs pro-

vide information about the river, its use, the fisheries and the Exceptional Waters program.

Temporary signs were installed at all three sites until permanent signs explaining Exceptional Waters & acknowledging partners are made.

Communications

View the webpage at:

www.grandriver.ca/exceptionalwaters.

A pamphlet on the program is available at the Brantford Tourism Centre, the Brant County Museum and Brantford Parks & Recreation and at partner organizations. They were made available at nine different trade shows and conferences, including the 6th Heritage River Conference in Guelph, visited by over 200 participants from around the world. The Grand River Watershed Forum, the Brantford Heart and Lung Association Garden Show and Laurier Brantford events were others attended.

River Usage

Adequate rainfall and flow management combined to maintain the river at a level where users had a quality experience when canoeing, kayaking,



The Lorne Bridge in Brantford, a beautiful in the heart of the Bell City.



The fishing on the Grand River between Paris and Brantford is “Exceptional” the environmental quality makes the river home to good numbers of steelhead and bass.

rafting, fishing or walking and cycling. Early in the season the Nith, a major tributary, provided good kayaking conditions. Outfitters reported increased use of their services by tourists and residents. Anglers had a good season. Each year more anglers come from longer distances on the basis of a spreading reputation for a quality experience. Outfitters reported increased business in the double digits.

Participants at the 4th Heritage River Conference in Guelph had the option of a Grand River paddle as a program activity. An international group of 26 paddlers chose a beautiful day to enjoy the river. In the fall the Southwestern Ontario Stewardship Workshop participants also had an opportunity to

make a similar voyage and again the river chose to show its best.

Grand River Fisheries

The Management Plan Implementation Committee published a community newsletter outlining the many projects they are promoting in the watershed. The Exceptional Waters project is a "best bet" of the plan and was highlighted in two different articles.



Invertebrate sampling is a big part of determining the river’s health.



Canoeing is a popular activity and business on the Exceptional Waters area of the Grand River because of the river’s beauty and easy access.

Presentations

Committee members presented an Exceptional Waters technical paper to conferences and partner meetings. A visual presentation shows partners, municipalities and funders highlights of the river corridor's merits and attractions.



Ontario Stewardship held a workshop in Brantford and Exceptional Waters canoeing was on the agenda.

Community Participation

In the spring community groups organized three major clean-up days. Many loads of garbage and litter were picked up after the spring high water flows had passed downriver. Major organizers were the Mohawk-Brantford Laurier Environment Group, Assumption College and the Bell City Anglers/ Beautiful Brantford Committee.

Local Outfitters pitched in with their staff and clients.

The Expositor published three major articles this year, focusing on the river and the people that make a living from it and also those that just enjoy being on or near the water. The Exceptional Waters project was recognized in these articles.



Cockshutt Bridge access kiosk & parking area is a community asset.



Members of the Community Advisory Committee:

- ✓ Brantford Community Foundation
- ✓ Brant Waterways Foundation
- ✓ Grand River Conservation Authority
- ✓ Grand River Conservation Foundation
- ✓ Trout Unlimited Canada
- ✓ Bell City Anglers
- ✓ Brant Resource Stewardship Network
- ✓ Brant Rod & Gun Club
- ✓ Brantford Steelheaders
- ✓ City of Brantford
- ✓ County of Brant
- ✓ Fish and Wildlife Guardians
(Brant Section)
- ✓ Grand Experiences Outfitters
- ✓ Grand River Fisheries Management Plan
Implementation Committee
- ✓ Grand Valley Trails Association
- ✓ Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- ✓ Ontario Steelheaders
- ✓ Six Nations of the Grand, Eco-Centre
- ✓ Trout Unlimited, Middle Grand Chapter



Bean Park Access improvements create access to the river and better community relations