

Overview of the Grand River Conservation Authority

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Photo: GRCA/S. Hannaford

Conservation Authorities in Ontario

- **Local** agencies organized on a watershed basis
- **Integrated** watershed management
- **Balance** human, environmental and economic needs



Photo: GRCA/B. Doherty

History of the GRCA

- In the 19th and 20th centuries, clearing the land and urban growth took a high toll on the natural system
- 20th century issues: floods, drought, poor water quality



History of the GRCA

- Business leaders pushed for watershed agency
- Link between a healthy environment and economy
- 1934 - they established the Grand River Conservation Commission



History of the GRCA

- 1946 – Conservation Authorities Act
- 1948 – Grand River watershed municipalities established the **Grand Valley Conservation Authority**



In 1966, the two agencies merged to form the Grand River Conservation Authority.



About the Grand River Watershed

Area

6,800 km²
larger than Prince Edward
Island

Drinking water

73 % wells (groundwater),
24 % river, 3 % Lake Erie

Wastewater

30 sewage treatment plants

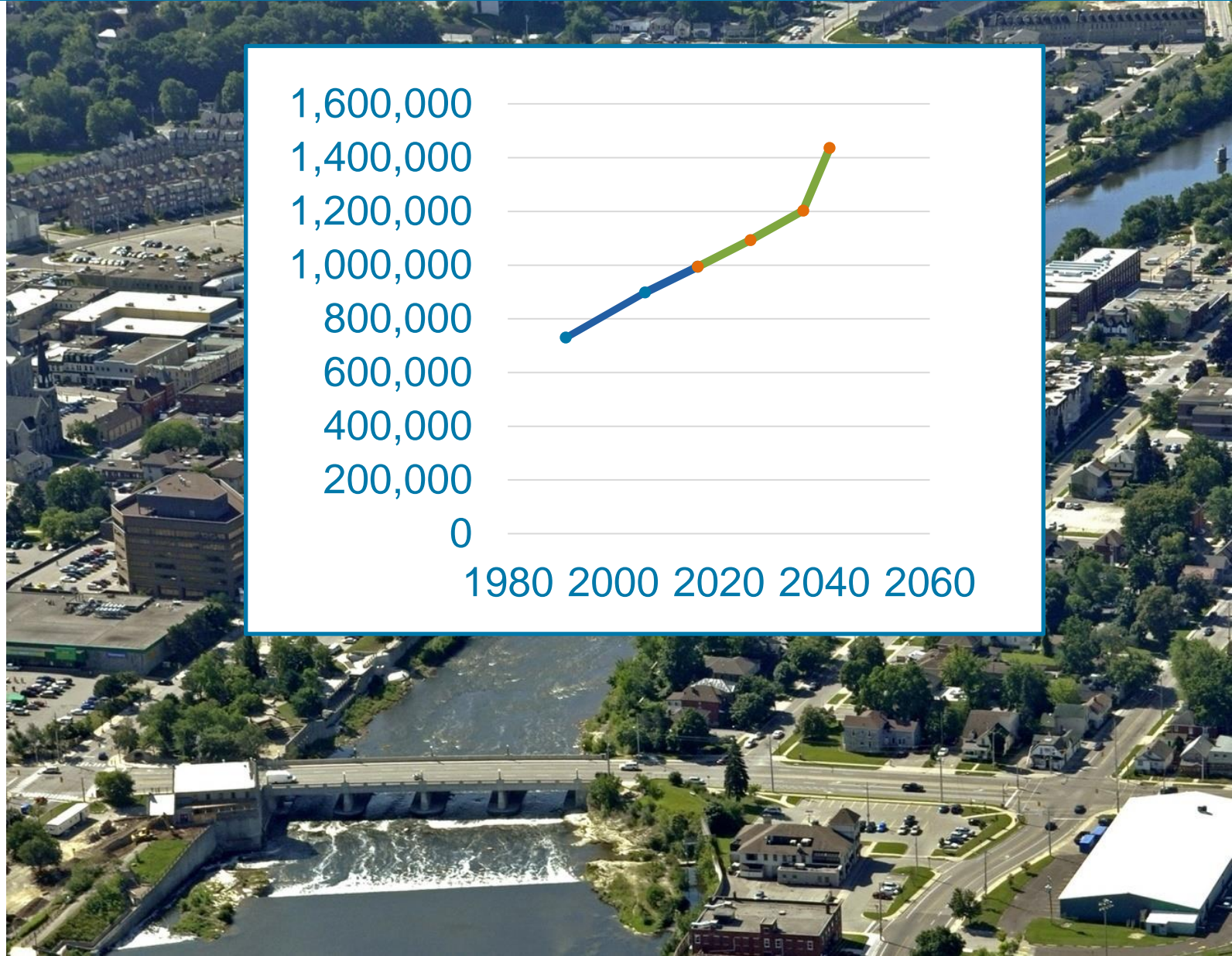


Watershed wide impacts

Population
Growth

Agriculture
influence

Climate
Change



GRCA Strategic Plan



Our Vision

A healthy watershed where we live, work, play and prosper in balance with the natural environment.

GRCA Strategic Plan (2022-2024)

Strategic Priorities

1. Protecting life and minimizing property damage
2. Improving the health of the watershed
3. Connecting people to the environment
4. Managing our land holdings responsibly



GRCA Strategic Plan (2022-2024)

5. Compliance and implementation of amendments/new regulations
6. Enhancing Indigenous awareness, understanding, and relationships



GRCA Conservation Areas

GRCA operates 11 fee-for use Conservation Areas & Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area

- Located throughout the watershed
- Total Land Area of CA's 11,500 ha or 28,430 ac
- Second largest operator of parks in the province, Ontario parks is biggest.

2 million visitors!!!



Conservation Area Operations

- 11 Conservation Areas
- Hiking/Walking
- Camping
 - Overnight and seasonal
- Boating/Fishing
- Beach/Swimming
- Winter activities

- 22 Full time staff, 12 seasonal and over 200 students



Conservation Areas

- Shand Dam (1942) and Belwood Lake CA
- Luther Marsh WMA (1952)
- Conestogo Lake CA (1958)
- Elora Gorge CA (1954)
- Pinehurst Lake CA (1955)
- Rockwood CA (1964)
- Byng Island CA (1966)
- Laurel Creek CA (1970)
- Brant CA (1971)
- Shades Mill CA (1972)
- Elora Quarry (1977)
- Guelph Lake CA (1979)



Interdepartmental Synergies

- Dam operations
- Precipitation Monitoring
- River Watch
- Guage Station
- Snow Survey
- Conservation Lands support and assistance
- Nature Centre support
- Provincial Offense officers



Local Belwood – GRCA interest

1. Shand Dam
2. Belwood Lake reservoir
3. Belwood Lake Conservation Area
4. Hunting Areas
5. Cottage Lot Program
6. Belwood Lake Village boat launch
7. Elora Cataract Rail Trail



Conservation Lands Department



Property and Natural Heritage

Property Team

- Conservation Lands
- Lease Administration
- Property Management
- Acquisition/Disposition

Natural Heritage Team

- Management Plans
- Forest Management
- Wetland Management
- Partnerships and Programs



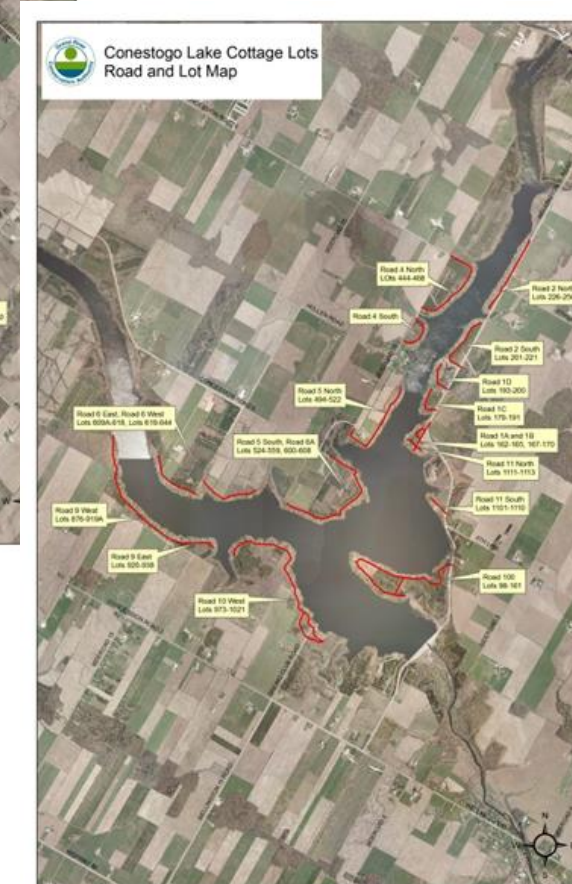
GRCA Landholdings

- Municipal e.g. Maintenance Agreements
- Agricultural e.g. Ag leases
- Recreational e.g. Trail Agreements



GRCA Landholdings

- Residential Tenancy Program
- Cottage Lot Program



GRCA Landholdings

- Commercial:
 - Service clubs (sailing, summer camps, etc.)
 - Private companies (billboards, storage buildings, cell phone towers, etc.)
 - Commercial licenses (largest commercial license- Chicopee Ski Club- Kitchener)



GRCA's Natural Heritage Program

- Developing watershed scale plans
- Tree planting, ecological restoration and monitoring on GRCA lands
- Managing forests on GRCA lands
- Supporting conservation authority management plans



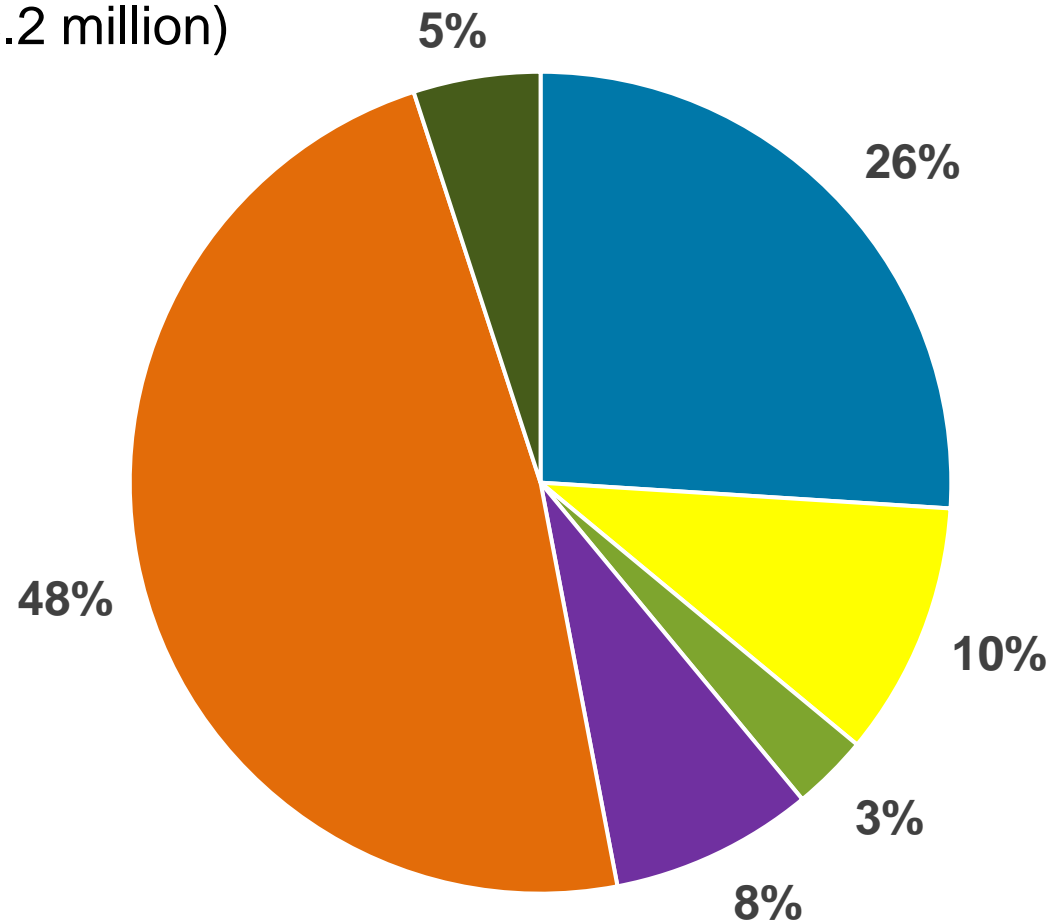
Great Horned Owl

2024 GRCA Budget

Revenue by Category

2024 Budget: \$34.4 million

(2023: \$33.2 million)



- Category 1 Municipal Apportionment
- General Operating Expenses Municipal Apportionment
- Category 2 Municipal Apportionment
- Government Grants
- Self Generated
- Reserves



Township of Centre Wellington 2024 Operating Budget Summary With 2023 Budget and Actual Results

Other Services - Grand River Conservation Authority

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Draft Budget	2023/2024 Budget Change	
				\$	%
<u>Revenues</u>					
GRCA - Special Levy	(115,951)	(117,787)	(117,560)	(1,609)	1.4%
<i>Total Revenues</i>	(115,951)	(117,787)	(117,560)	(1,609)	1.4%
<u>Expenses</u>					
GRCA - Capital & Operating Levy	115,951	115,793	117,560	1,609	1.4%
<i>Total Expenses</i>	115,951	115,793	117,560	1,609	1.4%
<i>Net Budget Grand River Conservation Authority</i>	-	(1,994)	-	-	0.0%

Major Changes Impacting This Budget

1. The GRCA levy is distributed between the Environmental Services budget and the tax supported budget based on the assessed value of properties connected or not connected to municipal water/wastewater services. Properties not connected to municipal water/wastewater services are assessed a special levy to fund the cost of the GRCA levy allocated to the tax supported budget.
2. The Township of Centre Wellington's portion of the total levy assessed by the GRCA in 2024 is \$344,247. This represents a 2.58% increase from the 2023 total levy amount.