



LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION

BUSINESS PLAN 2022



Member of



**Conservation
ONTARIO**
Natural Champions

*Healthy Watersheds
for
Healthy Communities*



A Message from the Chief Administrative Officer...

Rhonda Bateman, CAO

Over the past year, as the pandemic continued to affect all businesses, the staff at Lower Trent Conservation (LTC) continued to strive to meet 2021 business plan targets undaunted. Staff showed resolve and determination to achieve their annual commitments and numerous additional business plan goals.

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) will be releasing regulations that will affect conservation authorities' programs and services. One result will be the development of a new budgeting process. The coming year will bring increased interactions and negotiations with our partner municipalities to determine levels of support for non-mandated programs and services. We look forward to developing fulsome, mutually beneficial agreements that reflect the need for watershed-wide planning, environmental monitoring, source protection risk management and education, youth education and outreach opportunities.

The changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* will cause the updating of LTC's internal policy for Regulations. In addition, our Planning Policies and agreements will be restructured to include all relevant provincial policies.

LTC is anxious to complete the redesign and launch of our website. As the window to our operations, we are hoping to make navigation easier and the entire site more user friendly.

Watershed residents have been very receptive of our annual native tree, shrub and wildflower sale. We will continue the distribution of trees for the Northumberland County Emerald Ash Borer Replacement Tree Program. Expansion of our office wildflower garden will occur in 2022 to demonstrate the benefits of cultivating native plants which increases biodiversity.

For 2022, Lower Trent Conservation will continue to offer free admission to our conservation areas. We recognize the need for natural spaces, especially for the health and mental well-being of our watershed residents and visitors. We have learned the importance of our contribution during the pandemic. Conservation Lands staff aspire to keep our trails walkable and safe.

The following Business Plan outlines additional work LTC proposes to accomplish in 2022. We invite you to review our Strategic Plan on our website at www.LTC.on.ca to find the best way for you to contribute to achieving our vision of Healthy Watersheds for Healthy Communities.

Lower Trent Conservation – who we are...

The Lower Trent Region Conservation Authority (Lower Trent Conservation) was formed in 1968 under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Our area of jurisdiction covers 2,070 km² and includes all, or portions of, seven municipalities.

The *Conservation Authorities Act* of Ontario provides the mechanism for establishing and administering a conservation authority. The *Act* reads:

The purpose of this Act is to provide for the organization and delivery of programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in watersheds in Ontario.

Both the founding principles of the legislation and the legislation itself embody the three fundamental strengths of every conservation authority: local initiative, cost sharing, and watershed jurisdiction.

Local Initiative:

The conservation movement has been driven by and for the people for over 70 years. Community initiative is the strength and success of every conservation authority. Without this local motivation, an authority cannot be formed. People must first recognize the need for environmental action and request the provincial government to form a conservation authority. In making the request, watershed residents must be willing to contribute financially to the works of the organization and face the responsibility of directing it.

Cost Sharing:

Traditionally, municipalities within the conservation authority and the provincial government shared the costs of funding conservation programs. Over time, conservation authorities have expanded their partnerships to include other agencies and the community. A conservation authority flourishes only when local people have enough enthusiasm and conviction to support it financially.

Lower Trent Conservation is a member of Conservation Ontario - a network of 36 Conservation Authorities, all dedicated to conserving, restoring, and managing Ontario's natural resources on a watershed basis.

Watershed Jurisdiction:

A watershed – the area drained by a watercourse and its tributaries – is a natural geographic unit that crosses municipal boundaries. Conservation authorities can have jurisdiction over one or more watersheds. Since decisions and actions made in one location can affect upstream and downstream areas in other locations or other municipalities, watersheds are ideal units for protecting and managing the local environment. Conservation authorities are the only agencies in Ontario that manage natural resources on a watershed basis.

Our Strategic Plan outlines our priorities, organizational commitments and environmental goals, which together, will help us thrive in this changing world.

The vision, mission, and our organizational commitments and environmental goals were all taken into consideration in development of the 2022 Business Plan.

VISION STATEMENT

Our Vision Statement is our dream. It is what we believe are the ideal conditions for our watershed - how things would look if the issues important to us were completely and perfectly addressed.

Our vision for the future is:

Healthy watersheds for healthy communities

Our vision exemplifies the link between a healthy environment and the economic and social health of our communities, as well as the physical and mental health of the people who live here.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission Statement defines the purpose of Lower Trent Conservation. It talks about the present leading to the future - how we are going to achieve our vision.

Our mission is:

To protect land, water and living things by working with and inspiring others.

Our mission sets out our reason for being - to protect the local environment and recognize that we can't do it alone. We need to encourage others to take environmental action and work with other partners to achieve our goals.

Utilizing the strategic plan is a key component in helping Lower Trent Conservation prioritize our organizational commitments. We refer to the strategic plan to help direct the planning and decision making for the following year goals and objectives. The strategic plan is found at: <http://www.LTC.on.ca/about/>



Our Conservation Business

Lower Trent Conservation is in the business of protecting, enhancing, and restoring the natural environment. It is a business that builds healthier communities, improves the quality of life for residents, makes our area more appealing to visitors and new business, and helps ensure a more diverse and vibrant regional economy.

Lower Trent Conservation maintains a business approach to ensure accountability and transparency to our member municipalities, other partners, and the general public. The services we provide are customer focused – local responses to local needs. Services and programs are delivered through diverse sources of funding and in partnership with municipalities, other agencies, and our local communities.

WATERSHED PROGRAMS

to meet our Environmental Goals

Environmental Planning and Regulations

We provide municipalities with formal comments under the *Planning Act* (e.g., severances, minor variances, official plans, zoning by-laws, etc.) on a range of environmental issues. Our staff also review stormwater management plans for local municipalities. We offer technical advice to residents and developers for building and land use proposals. We also regulate development activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines, and waterways.

These services are aimed at ensuring that activities in environmentally sensitive areas will not result in a risk to public safety or property damage from flooding or erosion hazards. This preventative approach also ensures that wetlands and waterways are protected.

Flood Protection

Lower Trent Conservation provides services to reduce the threat of property damage and loss of life from flooding. These services include flood forecasting and flood warning, and the operation and maintenance of 10 flood control structures (dam, flood walls, berms, weirs, and overflow channels).

Low Water Response

Lower Trent Conservation assists in the coordination and support of local response in the event of a drought. We monitor local water levels and precipitation closely and work with local water users to reduce demand and mitigate effects of water shortages, encouraging voluntary water conservation measures. The program is based on the Ontario Low Water Response Program.



Natural Heritage Stewardship

Lower Trent Conservation works with landowners and other partners to encourage proactive stewardship of land and water resources. We provide information and advice to landowners about a variety of topics including: tree planting, shoreline naturalization, invasive species control, and species at risk protection. We also offer grants for land stewardship projects and sell native trees and seedlings for spring planting.

Environmental Monitoring and Reporting

We sample rivers and streams to better understand watershed health. In addition to our own monitoring activities, we participate in provincial water monitoring programs including the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and the Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network.

We also collect water quality and quantity data from monitoring wells as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network. The data is used to evaluate and report on existing conditions within the watershed, and helps to establish targets for protection and rehabilitation activities.

Environmental Education and Community Outreach

We provide conservation education programs to students of all ages including the Tri-County Children's Water Festival and programming for schools, youth groups, and day camps. We also host and attend community events, provide workshops, and distribute publications and other conservation information to help the public learn about the protection of local natural resources. We have adapted our youth programs to allow for more on-line learning opportunities.

Local Drinking Water Source Protection Services

Lower Trent Conservation provides Risk Management Official/Risk Management Inspector services and a Source Protection Education and Outreach program on behalf of local municipalities. These services help to implement the Trent Source Protection Plan, which came into effect on January 1, 2015.

Conservation Lands

Lower Trent Conservation owns 1,540 hectares of environmentally sensitive lands which form part of a regional system of protected landscapes. Our properties range in size from small parks to over 650 hectares. Ten properties are classified as Conservation Areas and provide venues for healthy and active lifestyles such as hiking, bicycling, fishing, canoeing, and other recreational activities. Seven Natural Habitat Areas, while open to the public, are left in a natural state with no maintained trails or recreational facilities. Staff maintain the facilities and lands and facilitate special events on the properties.



CORPORATE SERVICES

to meet our Organizational Commitments

Corporate Services oversees the business administration of the Conservation Authority as well as external relationships. It includes office and financial administration, human resources and asset management, and program planning and development. Corporate services staff manage the computer network and information systems, and provide digital mapping and communications support to other Lower Trent Conservation programs. Customer relations, partnership building, fundraising, communications, and marketing fall under the realm of corporate services.

Financial and Human Resources

In terms of financial management, constant vigilance is needed to ensure that the funding we receive from our member municipalities, the provincial and federal governments, other partners, agencies and donors is spent wisely for the betterment of our watershed. Ongoing effort is put into establishing partnerships to collaborate on watershed projects, and to seek funding support from other organizations to help get local conservation work done.

Lower Trent Conservation has established policies and procedures to set out administrative controls to: ensure health and safety, and fair, consistent treatment of staff; provide guidance to staff for program implementation; and ensure compliance with government legislation. These need to be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they are relevant and compliant with legislation.

Information Management and Geographic Information System (GIS)

As a knowledge-based, service-oriented organization, the accessibility of our information is an important part of our program. A significant amount of our data is displayed visually as maps, through our Geographic Information System (GIS). A wide range of map products is used by staff to assist with making decisions about land use planning and regulations, managing our conservation lands, and delivering stewardship programs. Lower Trent Conservation also assists municipalities and others with GIS projects on a fee for service basis.

Communications

Corporate communication activities include media relations and production of progress reports, annual reports, displays, brochures, and other communications products. In addition to traditional media, we use our website and social media (e.g., Facebook) to keep our municipal partners, watershed residents and other stakeholders, staff and the Board of Directors, up to date on our programs and events.

Fundraising

As a non-profit registered charity, Lower Trent Conservation has developed a fundraising program to support our conservation efforts. This includes: grant writing, direct requests to businesses and private donors, and fundraising campaigns. Many of our donated funds are currently directed to “Connecting Kids with Nature” in support of youth environmental education initiatives.

SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

conservation through collaboration with others

Regional Source Protection Program - Trent Conservation Coalition

Lower Trent Conservation is the program lead for the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Program, aimed at protecting the sources of water (rivers, lakes, aquifers) used for municipal drinking water systems. We provide administrative and technical support to the Source Protection Committee in its role of updating the source protection plans and monitoring and reporting on implementation progress.

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

Lower Trent Conservation administers the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan and provides communications and technical support specifically targeted at the issues present in the Bay. Lower Trent Conservation and Quinte Conservation co-chair the Bay of Quinte Restoration Council. The Restoration Council includes agencies from all levels of government, as well as local representatives to implement the Remedial Action Plan and undertake actions to rehabilitate the Bay.

The Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region includes the jurisdictions of five Conservation Authorities within the Trent River watershed - Crowe Valley, Ganaraska Region, Kawartha, Lower Trent, and Otonabee Conservation Authorities, and additional areas, outside of Conservation Authority jurisdiction within the Trent River watershed, in Peterborough and Haliburton Counties.

The Bay of Quinte was designated an Area of Concern in 1985 by the International Joint Commission under the *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* between Canada and the United States. The environmental concerns included excess nutrients, persistent toxic contamination, bacterial contamination, and the loss or destruction of fish and wildlife habitat. Impairments to beneficial uses, such as drinking water, fish, and recreation, are termed "Beneficial Use Impairments."



Goals for 2022

As well as our regular business activities, Lower Trent Conservation has recognized program improvements to achieve the goals and priorities identified in the Strategic Plan. These program improvements scheduled for 2022 will be undertaken as financing allows.

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS

- Fulfill targets set in the Transition Plan as required under provincial Regulations which includes identification of mandated programs and development of agreements with municipal partners for non-mandated service delivery
- Completion and launch of the new website
- Review and update internal policies for Purchasing, Accessibility and Customer Service, and Volunteer Program
- The development of a new Business Continuity Plan
- Develop and implement the automated process for the retention and destruction of electronic files under the Information Management Strategy

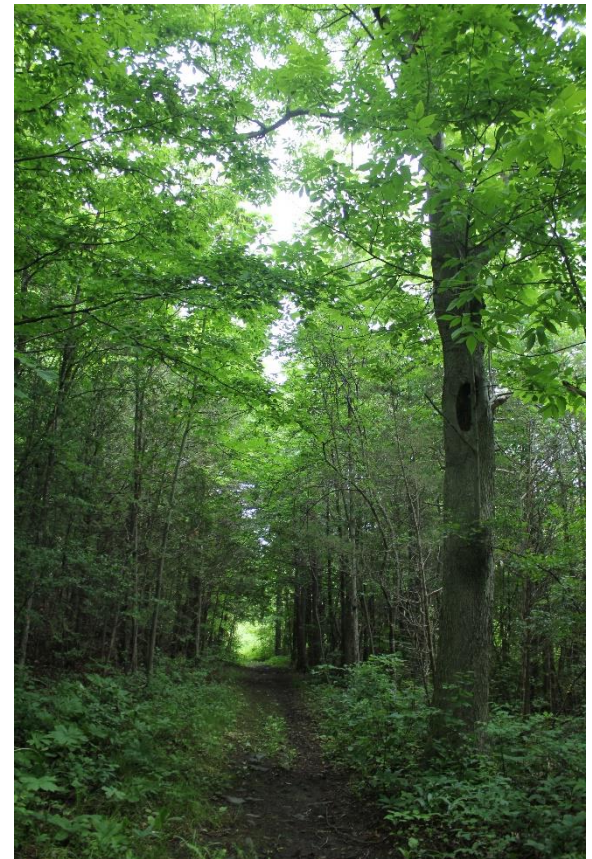
ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

ADVANCE WATERSHED KNOWLEDGE

- Institute a restructured youth education program - Love Your Watershed
- Advance prairie and oak savannah habitat monitoring and restoration on CA lands
- Complete remote sensing project and draft report for analysis of cover crops and phosphorus management

PROTECT LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

- Update Section 28 policies under the *Conservation Authorities Act* as per new regulatory requirements
- Update Planning Policies to reflect all provincial regulations
- Update mapping products based on regulatory changes
- Prepare Section 36 work plan submission under the *Clean Water Act*
- Host outreach workshops with our municipal partners for Planning, Regulations, and Source Protection
- Improvement to online forms for permits and complaints

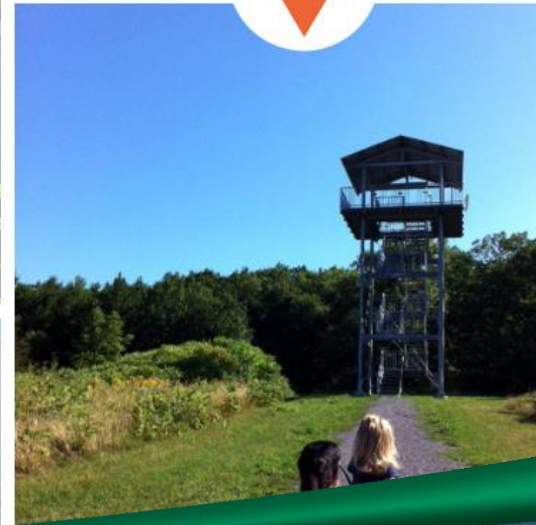


SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- Work with the Municipality of Trent Hills to implement priority recommendations from the Dam Safety Review for the Warkworth Dam including the development of a dam operations manual and the purchase of new stop logs for the dam
- Revise mapping, identify and revisit threats for Source Protection based on proposed changes to the Technical Rules under the *Clean Water Act*
- Develop plans to complete required thinning in CA red pine plantations
- Upgrade directional signage at Proctor Park, Goodrich-Loomis, and Seymour Conservation Areas
- Upgrades to King's Mill building including eavestroughing and staining

INSPIRE OTHERS TO TAKE ACTION

- Further expansion of the Native Plant Sale through the introduction of a Little Forests package and continued hosting of the Northumberland County Emerald Ash Borer Replacement Tree Program
- Expand the wildflower garden at the office to promote biodiversity and create educational opportunities
- Host local stewardship workshops on-line or in-person
- Under Forests Ontario, complete rural stewardship project



EXPENSES		\$
Watershed Programs – Science & Services		
Staffing & Travel		645,967
Equipment, Maintenance, Materials, and Supplies		19,390
Environmental Planning & Regulations Projects		2,500
Environmental Monitoring & Reporting		39,000
Flood Forecasting & Protection Works		39,359
Education & Outreach		96,953
Stewardship		26,500
Local Source Protection Services		122,120
	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	\$ 991,789
Watershed Programs – Conservation Lands		
Staffing & Travel		207,290
Taxes & Insurance		65,412
Workshop Maintenance, Materials & Supplies		25,300
Conservation Centre		7,000
Conservation Areas Maintenance		18,500
	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	\$ 323,502
Corporate Services		
Staffing & Travel		540,932
Equipment, Maintenance, Materials, and Supplies		40,943
Information Management & Technology		8,000
Corporate fees (e.g., legal, audit, bank, insurance)		58,110
Board of Directors Expenses		9,000
Communications & Memberships		34,240
	<i>SUB-TOTAL</i>	\$ 691,225
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,006,516
REVENUES		
Provincial Grants		68,831
Municipal General Levies		1,024,074
Special Benefiting Levies – Property Taxes		25,275
BQRAP Funding		117,071
Provincial Drinking Water Source Protection		150,624
Source Protection – Municipal RMO and Education-Outreach		122,120
Education, Outreach, and Stewardship		115,953
Other Revenues, Donations & Fees		382,568
	TOTAL REVENUES	\$2,006,516
SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS (revenues & expenditures)		
Regional Source Protection Program (2021-2022)		\$629,846
Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan (estimate)		\$320,234

Monitoring Success

Healthy Watersheds for Healthy Communities

This year, Lower Trent Conservation will spend \$2,006,516 to provide flood protection services, improve water quality, protect water supplies, provide environmental education, promote stewardship and undertake restoration activities, operate conservation areas and maintain trails, and manage other sensitive environmental lands.

In addition to the funds shown in the budget, Lower Trent Conservation receives funds to deliver its significant partnership programs:

- ~\$629,846 from the provincial government to deliver the 2021-2022 Regional Source Protection program on behalf of the conservation authorities within the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region.

- ~\$320,234 from the federal and provincial governments to deliver the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan on behalf of local partners.

Lower Trent Conservation provides an Interim Report to the Board of Directors each fall, reporting on progress in implementing the annual Business Plan, and releases its Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements following its annual meeting held in February. Staff will be tracking and reporting on progress made in implementing the goals and priorities set out in the Strategic Plan.



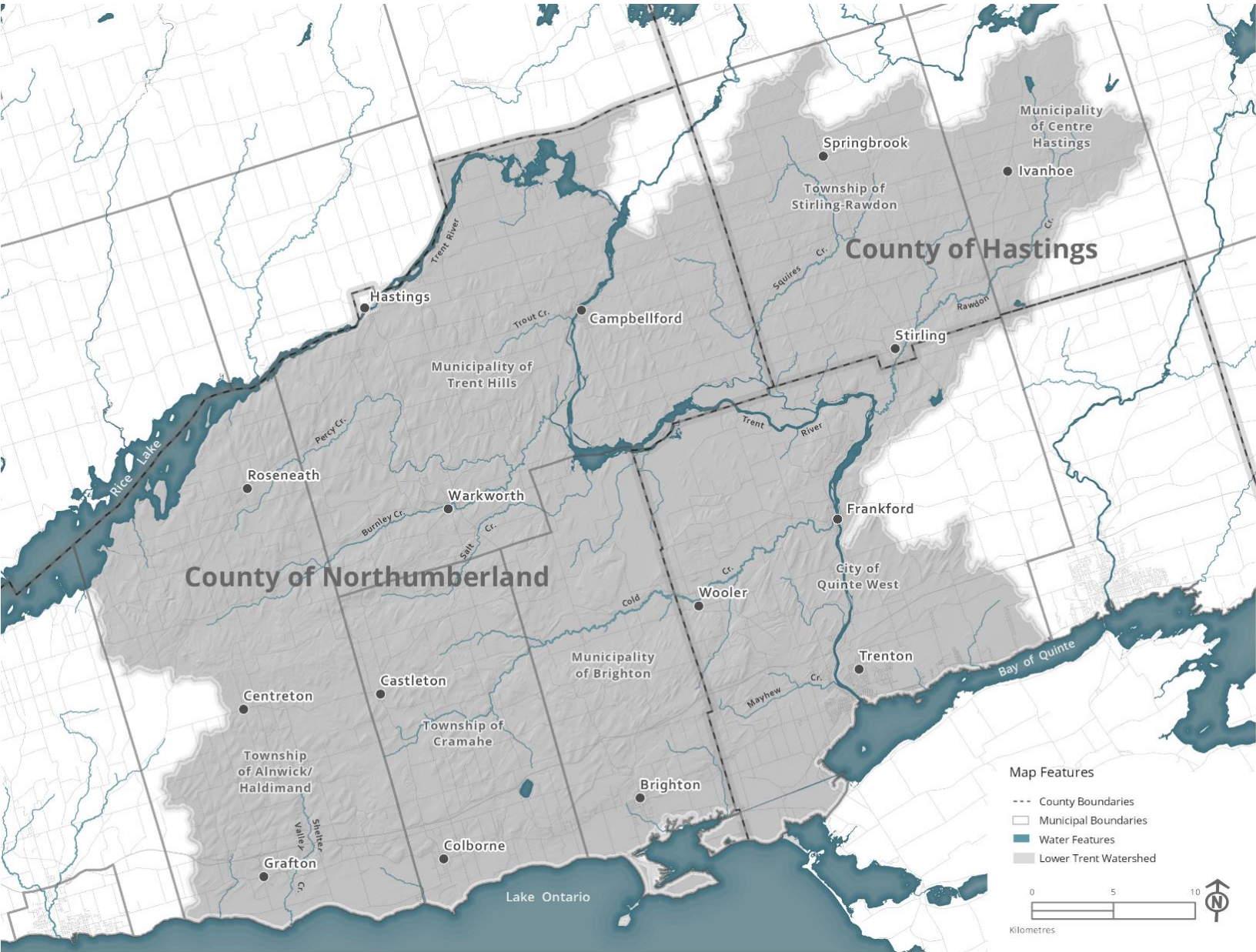
What it means to your municipality?

Municipal Services	<p style="text-align: center;">Lower Trent Conservation Services <i>"specialist staff expertise shared among municipalities"</i></p>
Planning & Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional environmental planning expertise, including network of provincial experts through Conservation Ontario and provincial ministries • Provincial policies and standards on environmental matters brought into the municipal decision-making process based on Board of Directors approved local policies • Delivery of regulations to provide hazard land, floodplain, and wetland protection in a manner that coordinates with municipal planning responsibilities • Input into official plans, community plans, zoning by-laws regarding natural hazard, natural heritage, and water protection • Advice on <i>Planning Act</i> applications (severances, subdivisions, zoning by-law amendments, etc.) • Support for municipality when other reviews or approvals are required (i.e. <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> process for new roads, bridges, pipes, and other infrastructure)
Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & programs inform municipal emergency response planning responsibilities • Flood forecasting & warning • Low water response • Mapping (floodplains, wellhead protection areas, intake protection zones) • Operation & maintenance of flood and erosion control structures • Watershed data collection for water budget and extreme event analysis and modelling • Regulation of natural hazards reduces municipal liability when severe weather events occur
Water, Sewage & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking Water Source Protection • Surface water monitoring • Groundwater monitoring • Stormwater review • Infrastructure review (culverts, bridges)
Tourism & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Areas for year round passive recreation opportunities (hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, picnicking, geocaching) • Acquisition & protection of ecologically valuable lands • Active outdoor living programs (hikes, events) • Children's environmental programs (e.g., Water Festival) • Facilities for environmental education and outdoor sport/special events at Goodrich-Loomis and Proctor Park Conservation Areas • Hunting opportunities in Murray Marsh
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to development of desirable communities to live, work, and play in (clean water, green space, outdoor tourism, environmentally aware residents) • Extra dollars drawn into the local community (government and business grants, private donations) • Lower Trent Conservation buys locally from many community businesses & suppliers
Sustainable & Resilient Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of good stewardship & low impact, ecologically sustainable development • Monitoring and reporting on watershed health to identify program priorities • Tree seedling sales • Shoreline naturalization (landowner advice & grants) • Protection of surface water and groundwater resources • Wetland protection & enhancement and habitat & biodiversity conservation • Improvement and protection of the Bay of Quinte to ensure long-term health and benefits to the community (through administration of the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan)

Member Municipalities

Township of Alnwick/Haldimand
 Municipality of Centre Hastings
 City of Quinte West
 Municipality of Trent Hills

Municipality of Brighton
 Township of Cramahe
 Township of Stirling-Rawdon



Working with Others

Partners in Conservation

Lower Trent Conservation's Board of Directors and staff work with a growing number of partners who share our concern for the future of our region's environment. Lower Trent Conservation has worked with every sector of the community – from school children, individual landowners, and service clubs to major corporations, colleges, and government ministries – to achieve our collective vision of a healthy environment. Our partners provide information, ideas, labour, and funding.

Conservation Donors

Lower Trent Conservation, as a non-profit organization, relies on donations to support delivery of our programs. Our exceptional youth environmental programs are only possible through donations from businesses, foundations, community organizations, and the general public.

Volunteers for Conservation

Lower Trent Conservation's "**Volunteers for Conservation**" program offers opportunities for individuals to get involved with local environmental projects. These dedicated groups and individuals devote time and energy to various local conservation projects.



LOWER TRENT
C O N S E R V A T I O N

*We thank all of our partners, donors, and volunteers and look forward to working with you and others toward our common vision of **healthy watersheds for healthy communities.***