

LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION



HEALTHY WATERSHEDS FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Strategic Plan | 2018-2028

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND CAO

May 16, 2018

Fifty years ago, local communities joined together to pool their resources in an effort to protect the natural environment of the Lower Trent watershed region and our conservation authority was born.

For the past 50 years, our work has contributed to building healthier communities, improving the quality of life for residents, making our area more appealing to visitors and new businesses, and helping to ensure a more vibrant regional economy.

Today, the world is changing rapidly – our climate, our environment, technology, legislative requirements - the only constant is change. This strategic plan will guide the efforts of Lower Trent Conservation as it strives to respond to the challenges and opportunities that all this change presents.

The Strategic Plan examines the drivers of change and sets out our values, vision, and mission. It outlines our priorities – environmental goals and organizational commitments – that, together, will help us thrive in this changing world.

As an organization, we strive to demonstrate leadership in integrated watershed management and make positive contributions to the watershed communities in which we operate. We support a work environment that encourages originality and innovation, and promotes enthusiasm in meeting new and old challenges and the needs of our customers.

Many thanks to all who have contributed in developing this strategic plan: the Board of Directors, staff, our member municipalities, agencies and community groups, and the public. Together we built the plan, now let's implement it.



Jim Alyea
Chair



Glenda Rodgers
Chief Administrative Officer

WELCOME TO LOWER TRENT CONSERVATION

Lower Trent Conservation is a not-for-profit, community-based environmental protection organization dedicated to protecting, enhancing, and restoring local natural resources within the Lower Trent watershed region. We work in partnership with municipal, provincial and federal governments, businesses, and community organizations to deliver locally-based environmental programs and services.

OBJECTIVES FOR CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACROSS THE PROVINCE

ENSURE

that Ontario's rivers, lakes and streams are properly safeguarded, managed and restored

PROTECT, MANAGE AND RESTORE

Ontario's woodlands, wetlands and natural habitat

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN

programs that will protect life and property from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES

for the public to enjoy, learn from, and respect Ontario's natural environment



- Established by the provincial government at the request of local municipalities in 1968, under the Conservation Authorities Act
- One of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario, and a member of Conservation Ontario
- Governed by a Board of Directors representing its seven member municipalities



2,070 KM²



7 MUNICIPALITIES



75,000 PEOPLE

MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES

Township of Alnwick/Haldimand • Municipality of Brighton • Municipality of Centre Hastings
Township of Cramahe • City of Quinte West • Township of Stirling-Rawdon • Municipality of Trent Hills

OUR JURISDICTION

Located in southeastern Ontario, the Lower Trent watershed region straddles the counties of Northumberland and Hastings. The region covers approximately 2070 square kilometres and is comprised of the watersheds that flow into the lower Trent River, and several other watersheds that flow directly into Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte.



DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY

CFB Trenton • Agriculture • Tourism • Recreation • Aggregates • Manufacturing • Community services

RURAL & SMALL COMMUNITIES

2 counties • 7 municipalities • 1 city • Towns, villages & hamlets • First Nation community • Military community

A DIVERSE GEOGRAPHY

Trent River • Cold & warm water streams • Bay of Quinte • Lake Ontario
Oak Ridges Moraine • Drumlins & eskers • Glacial shorelines & lake beds
Forests • Wetlands – marsh & swamp • Remnant prairie & savannah

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

Drivers of change are the opportunities, challenges, and external forces that affect our business and how we plan for the future.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

Climate change is the most significant environmental challenge we are facing globally. It increases the frequency and magnitude of flooding and drought. Locally, increased development pressure puts more stresses on our environment. Together, they have the potential to negatively affect water quantity and quality, and alter plant and animal life cycles and their habitats, increasing the risk of biodiversity loss. More species are at risk and the spread of invasive species is increasing.



LEGISLATIVE AND ECONOMIC LANDSCAPES

New legislation and updates to existing administrative and environmental legislation (e.g., Conservation Authorities Act, Employment Standards Act, Oak Ridges Moraine Plan, Greenbelt Plan and Growth Plan) will dictate the need for changes to our programs and services, development of new policies, and changes to administrative processes. The current economic and political climates limit the available funding for conservation work. Accessing the necessary funding to deliver comprehensive environmental programs and services will continue to be a challenge with these uncertainties.



CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS, VALUES AND BEHAVIOURS

The population of our region continues to grow and change: the population is aging and urban influences are more prevalent. Residents have an increased awareness of environmental issues and more understanding of its connection with human health. This increased awareness, combined with easier access to information, creates greater expectations for services through new and traditional methods. Today's workforce is shifting, with new perspectives and aptitudes. As well, a large proportion of experienced staff are exiting the workforce, requiring knowledge transfer and succession planning.



ADVANCING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Technology is constantly changing, bringing opportunities to communicate, analyze, map, and share information like never before. It changes how our programs and services are delivered, creating higher expectations internally and externally. Likewise, advancements in science bring about new ways of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information to make better watershed management decisions. Increases in costs are often associated with innovations in science and technology.

VALUES

Our values are the essence of our identity – our principles, beliefs, and philosophy. Our values guide our actions and shape the kind of organization we are.

Photo Credit — Doug McRae

LOWER TRENT CONSERVATION BELIEVES IN:



INTEGRITY,
ACCOUNTABILITY
AND TRANSPARENCY



BEING ADAPTIVE AND
EMBRACING CHANGE



SUPPORTING STAFF
EXCELLENCE
AND WELLNESS



PARTNERSHIPS,
COLLABORATION
AND TEAMWORK



CONTINUOUS
IMPROVEMENT
AND INNOVATION



PROVIDING
QUALITY SERVICE



HEALTHY WATERSHEDS FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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 new mission sets out our reason for being - to protect the local environment, recognizing 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS & PRIORITIES



- Invest in monitoring programs to track and report on changes in our environment to support adaptive resource management
- Acquire additional watershed data and increase use of analytical tools to facilitate a greater understanding of the watershed, enhance data analyses, and guide program development
- Identify and fill information gaps on vegetation communities and create seamless Ecological Land Classification mapping for the watershed region
- Undertake inventories of our Conservation Lands, including identification of invasive species and habitat for species at risk
- Develop understanding of the anticipated impacts of climate change locally
- Encourage data sharing with our partners and improve accessibility to our information to advance watershed knowledge in our communities

- Incorporate measures into our programs to adapt to climate change and mitigate its effect on the watershed region
- Protect water resources through preparation of a stormwater management policy
- Develop programs to maintain the long term health of the Bay of Quinte following de-listing as an Area of Concern
- Develop and support implementation of a Natural Heritage Strategy for the watershed region, incorporating Ecological Land Classification communities and mapping developed by individual municipalities and the Province
- Develop a stewardship restoration plan to prioritize target areas and projects
- Establish policies to ensure a no net loss of wetlands and protect other natural habitats

Environmental goals and priorities have been set out to guide us toward our vision:
HEALTHY WATERSHEDS FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

We have identified 4 environmental goals, and priority actions for each:



SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



INSPIRE OTHERS TO TAKE ACTION

- Work with our municipalities to complete watershed plans, on a priority basis, in areas facing development pressures
- Collaborate with our municipalities to help them understand and meet the environmental requirements of new provincial land use plans, policies and regulations
- Work with our municipalities and communities to ensure that sources of drinking water are adequately protected
- Create guidelines and communication tools that clarify the requirements for landowners and business operators to comply with our regulations and programs
- Update and expand the Lake Ontario shoreline management plan to include all our Lake Ontario shoreline municipalities
- Collaborate with our municipalities and others to update floodplain mapping and other tools to support the planning, regulations and flood protection programs
- Connect people with nature by encouraging increased use of our Conservation Lands and other natural areas
- Promote the connection between environmental health and human wellness
- Identify and implement opportunities to improve accessibility on our Conservation Lands
- Enhance our community outreach program to further engage the public and provide opportunities for experiential learning
- Further develop our volunteer program to engage more people in conservation work and citizen science
- Incorporate best management and stewardship practices on our Conservation Lands, utilizing them as learning sites for municipalities and community members to incorporate on their property
- Recognize conservation efforts of the community through awards and other recognition tools
- Expand and implement the land stewardship program and capitalize on opportunities to deliver other stewardship programs
- Sustain robust youth environmental education programming, providing in-school and experiential learning to connect kids with nature and foster the next generation of environmental champions
- Seize opportunities to lead by example, through practices on our Conservation Lands, program delivery, and business operations

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS

To achieve our environmental goals, Lower Trent Conservation must be effective and efficient in how it does business.

WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES:



**FOSTER STRONG
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**
with our municipal partners



CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
to share expertise
and gain efficiencies



**USE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY
AND INNOVATION**
to modernize programs and
improve decision making



ATTRACT AND RETAIN
skilled, professional
and dedicated staff



SEEK FUNDING
from a variety of sources
to support and further develop
our programs and services



PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICES
that meet or exceed
customer expectations

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This strategic plan will be reviewed regularly and used to influence decision making, and to guide the development and implementation of annual business plans, budgets and work plans. The ultimate success of the plan will depend on Lower Trent Conservation's ability to involve, engage, and motivate the watershed community – municipalities, businesses, community organizations, and residents.



50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

Lower Trent Conservation has been working with the local community since 1968 to protect and enhance the watershed. Many thanks to all our partners, the public, volunteers, donors, and staff for their past contributions and for their important work in the years to come.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE PAST 50 YEARS INCLUDE:

- ✓ 17 properties, totaling 1500 hectares, acquired and managed for environmental protection and outdoor recreation
- ✓ Floodplain mapping prepared for Lake Ontario, Bay of Quinte, Trent River, and 14 tributaries
- ✓ Flood forecasting and low water advisory programs developed
- ✓ Environmental plan review services provided to local municipalities
- ✓ Hazard land and wetland regulations implemented to protect people and property
- ✓ 10 flood and erosion control structures built and maintained
- ✓ Environmental monitoring programs developed and watershed report cards produced
- ✓ Outreach to thousands of people through events and publications
- ✓ Youth education programs developed and delivered
- ✓ Land stewardship programs implemented and tree seedlings sold and planted.
- ✓ Coordination of a regional drinking water source protection program and local delivery
- ✓ Local administration of the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan



LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION

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Natural Champions

