



LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Member of

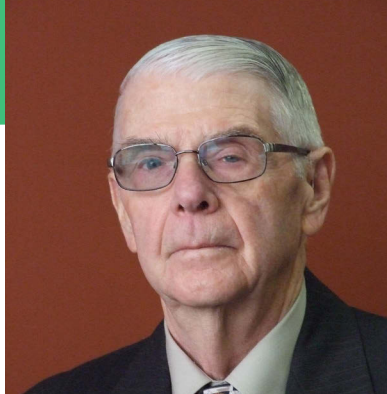


**Conservation
ONTARIO**
Natural Champions

Message from the CAO and Chair



Rhonda Bateman, CAO



Eric Sandford, Chair

Early 2022 ushered in reduced restrictions for public gatherings and movement. This return to pre-COVID normality was greeted with both delight and caution.

The re-instatement of our Tri-County Children's Water Festival in-person was a highlight for both staff and the thousand children, teachers and volunteer attendees.

The Lower Trent Conservation office was re-opened by appointment, to those seeking in-person consultation with our staff members. Our staff work both from the office and remotely.

Additional positive change included the Lower Trent Conservation Board of Directors membership expansion in April 2022 with the addition of an agricultural representative appointed by the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

Another potential increase in Board membership is moving forward as a request from Havelock-Belmont-Methuen Township was presented to the Board to expand Lower Trent Conservation's watershed boundary to include a section of the Township not currently encompassed by conservation authority planning and development regulations.

In late August, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) was designated as the Ministry responsible for administering the Conservation Authorities Act with the responsibility being transferred from MECP. The designation is a return to the historic relationship between MNRF and Conservation Authorities.

Continued changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* were introduced through several new regulations in 2021 and again in early 2022. The year ended with the introduction and subsequent passing of Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022. These new legislative and regulatory changes are being met with caution.

The past year was both challenging and rewarding. We would like to thank our municipal partners and volunteers for the continued support for programs and services that benefit all residents of our watershed.

Board of Directors 2022

Municipalities located within the Lower Trent Conservation watershed region appoint representatives to the Board of Directors.

The 11-member Board representing the seven municipalities and one appointed agricultural representative, located either entirely or partially within the watershed region, oversees the activities of the Conservation Authority and reports back to their respective municipal councils.

Township of Alnwick/ Haldimand

Mike Filip

Municipality of Brighton

Mary Tadman

Mark Bateman (Vice-Chair)

Municipality of Centre Hastings

Eric Sandford (Chair)

Township of Cramahe

Don Clark

City of Quinte West

Jim Alyea

Lynda Reid

Township of Stirling- Rawdon

Bob Mullin

Municipality of Trent Hills

Rick English

Gene Brahaney

Agricultural Rep

Mark DeJong

About Us

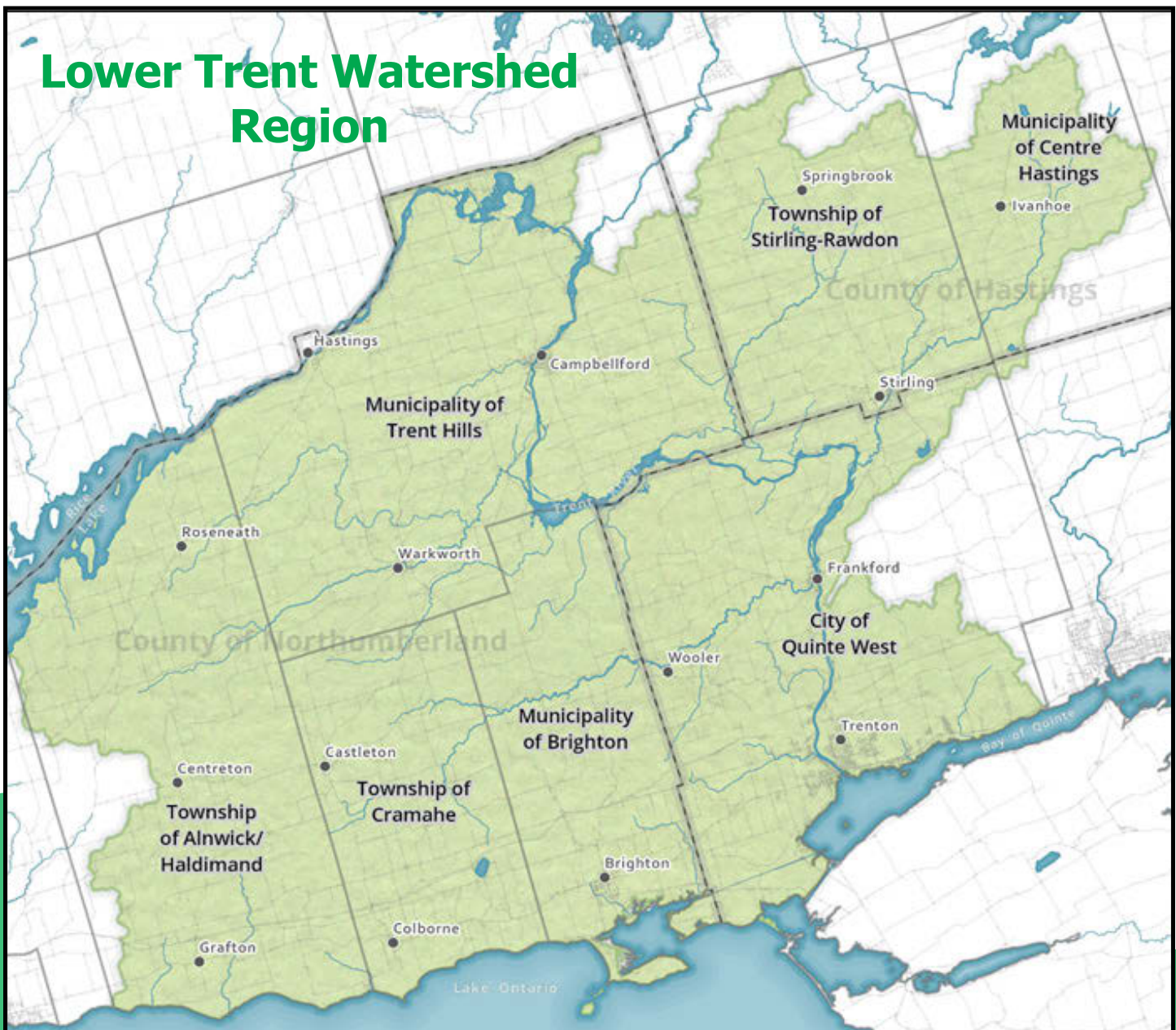
Lower Trent Conservation is a community-based, non-profit environmental protection organization dedicated to protecting, restoring, and managing natural resources across the Lower Trent watershed region.

Established by the provincial government and our municipal partners in 1968, under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, Lower Trent Conservation is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario, and a member of Conservation Ontario.

Lower Trent Conservation works in partnership with municipal, provincial and federal governments, businesses, community organizations and the general public to deliver locally-based environmental programs.



Lower Trent Conservation's watershed jurisdiction covers 2,070 square kilometres including the Trent River and the watersheds of eight main tributaries, as well as areas that flow directly into Lake Ontario and the Bay of Quinte between Grafton and Quinte West.



Watershed Science & Services

Environmental Planning and Regulations

Development activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines, streams, and rivers can damage the environment or pose a threat to public safety. Lower Trent Conservation offers advice to municipalities, developers, and landowners to help them meet provincial policy requirements and to ensure compliance with government legislation. These services also ensure environmental integrity and protect people and property from flooding and erosion hazards.

Regulation of construction activities in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines, and waterways ensures that activities in these areas will not result in a risk to public safety or property damage. This preventative approach also ensures the protection of important natural features.

2022 Highlights

- Provided comments to local municipalities on 310 *Planning Act* applications (severances, minor variances, official plans, zoning by-laws, etc.).
- Provided ongoing review and input to 24 subdivision proposals, 3 condominium proposals and 32 site plan approval applications.
- Participated in 3 legal court cases regarding Section 28 regulations.
- Received applications for 398 permits for development activities under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (Ontario Regulation 163/06 Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses) and approved 383 permits.
- Identified 63 new violations; Conducted enforcement investigations related to 93 violations (new and ongoing); Resolved 47 violations.
- Responded to 66 complaints.
- Responded to 738 online property inquiries and provided comments regarding property specific development constraints and environmental conditions for 635 new general development inquiries and 36 legal requests.
- Conducted 363 site inspections to assist with the environmental review of municipal planning and permit applications.
- Delivered outreach and education on source water protection, regulations and planning with municipal partners.
- Delivered risk management services as part of the implementation of the Trent Source Protection Plan: completed 2 risk management plans addressing 5 different significant drinking water threats, conducted 1 risk management plan compliance inspection, and issued 24 restricted land use notices.



Watershed Science & Services

Flood Forecasting and Protection Works

Lower Trent Conservation, in cooperation with local municipalities and the provincial government, plays a key role in reducing the risk of property damage and loss of life from natural hazards such as flooding.

Weather forecasts and conditions along the region's waterways are monitored daily, as part of a flood forecasting and warning system, in order to provide the earliest possible notification to municipalities and the public of the potential for flooding.

In addition, 10 flood control structures, including a dam, flood walls, berms, weirs, and overflow channels, have been constructed to help protect existing development in flood susceptible areas from potential damages resulting from a flood. The structures were constructed with the aid of the Province of Ontario and local municipalities on a cost-sharing basis.

2022 Highlights

- Issued 6 bulletins regarding high water levels on local water systems: 4 water safety statements, 2 flood outlook statements or flood watches were issued.
- Conducted daily risk assessments for flood forecasting including monitoring weather forecasts, water levels/flows at 13 stations, and precipitation at 10 stations; carried out 13 snow surveys at 4 snow sampling sites.



- Conducted annual inspections of 10 flood control structures.
- Installation of the new logs at Warkworth Dam was completed in fall 2022.

Environmental Monitoring and Reporting

Watershed monitoring activities focus on collecting data to evaluate and report on existing conditions within the watershed. LTC works in partnership with our municipalities on water monitoring programs to support local initiatives as well as provincial monitoring networks.

- Monthly provincial surface water quality monitoring was completed (9 sites) as well as monthly LTC surface water quality sampling (9 sites). 144 surface water quality samples were collected in total from March until October.
- Annual groundwater quality monitoring was undertaken at 5 wells. Ongoing water level monitoring is being logged at 11 wells.



Watershed Science & Services

Education, Outreach and Stewardship

Education and outreach are critically important for engaging residents in environmentally sustainable behaviours and drawing attention to conservation issues. Special events, workshops, and landowner stewardship activities provide opportunities for people to learn about and get involved in the protection of natural resources within the watershed region. Lower Trent Conservation also recognizes that the students of today are the environmental champions of tomorrow. Through a variety of educational activities, young people learn about the importance of our natural environment and are inspired to care for our precious environment. Lower Trent Conservation's youth environmental education initiatives are made possible through grants and donations from local industry, business, service clubs, and private individual supporters.

2022 Highlights

- Return to in-person Tri-County Children's Water Festival – over 1,000 students, teachers, parents and volunteers attended.
- Piloted a restructured program to engage students from grades 7-12 called 'Love Your Watershed'. Three classes from two schools implemented environmental projects at their schools.
- Reached over 1,000 students through virtual and school yard programs.
- Engaged over 5,000 residents through social media specifically on Drinking Water Source Protection.
- Revived the Discover your Watershed Program with two events in April at Proctor Park and Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Areas.
- Attended 12 community events and staff were guest speakers at 6 events.
- Delivered educational workshops to two high school classes at the Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area.
- The Annual Native Plant Sale had 221 orders for 12,900 tree and shrub seedlings; 180 potted tree saplings; 160 wildflower kits and 5 Little Forest kits.
- Distributed 12,000 free tree seedlings to Northumberland County residents through the Emerald Ash Borer Replacement Tree Program.
- Provided support for cover cropping for 24 landowners covering 1,600 acres of agricultural land. Sampled the soil of 900 acres of agricultural land, 76 fields, 11 landowners.
- Conducted 8 Healthy Lands – Clean Water site visits, and 6 Forests Ontario Program Delivery Agent site visits.
- Received funding from the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund in partnership with Conservation Ontario, the provincial Great Lakes Local Action Fund, and the Trenton Rotary Club for the Restoring the Trenton Greenbelt Project. Site preparations for transforming the lawn into a meadow included elimination of turf and invasive plants, soil aeration, compost spreading, cover crop seeding, and seeding of native wildflowers and grasses.



Tri-County Children's Water Festival



Hastings County Plowing Match

Conservation Lands

Lower Trent Conservation owns 1,540 hectares of natural open space. These forests, valleys, meadows, and wetlands form part of a regional system of protected landscapes that depict the natural diversity of the region. They are special places in the watershed that are protected from development, where the natural world comes first.

There are 17 properties that range in size from small parkettes to over 650 hectares. Ten properties are classified as Conservation Areas and provide venues for healthy, active lifestyles such as hiking, mountain biking, fishing, canoeing, and other outdoor recreational activities. These properties feature over 27 kilometres of trails, and other facilities such as parking lots, privies, boat launches, picnic shelters, and the Goodrich-Loomis Conservation Centre. In addition, seven Natural Habitat Areas, while open to the public, are left in a natural state with no maintained trails or recreational facilities.

2022 Highlights

- Hazardous trees from Emerald Ash Borer infestations and major windstorm events were removed along several trail systems: 37 by LTC staff and 1 by contractor.
- 'Special Events' at conservation areas were revived. Some of these events included: field training for Cadets, running race, wedding photo session, celebration of life, memorial race fundraiser, OPP fundraising race event, and fall camp for Beavers and Girl Guides.
- Assisted Watershed Science and Services staff with removal and replacement of logs at Warkworth Dam.
- CA Lands properties added to potential filming locations database.
- Installation of Wood Duck habitat structures at King's Mill CA.
- Continued monitoring and protection of turtle nesting areas along the Trenton Greenbelt.
- Lands staff aided in the preparation stages of the Trenton Greenbelt Restoration Project.
- Invasive species management surrounding sensitive habitat at Sager Conservation Area.
- Application of herbicide for Dog Strangling Vine management at Sager Conservation Area to aid in the protection of prairie grasslands.
- Coordinated with the Trenton Rotary Club for a garbage cleanup along the Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area.
- Dealt with higher than normal vandalism issues throughout our conservation areas.



Restoring the Greenbelt Site Preparations



Installation of Wood Duck Boxes



Garbage cleanup at Trenton Greenbelt CA

Corporate Services

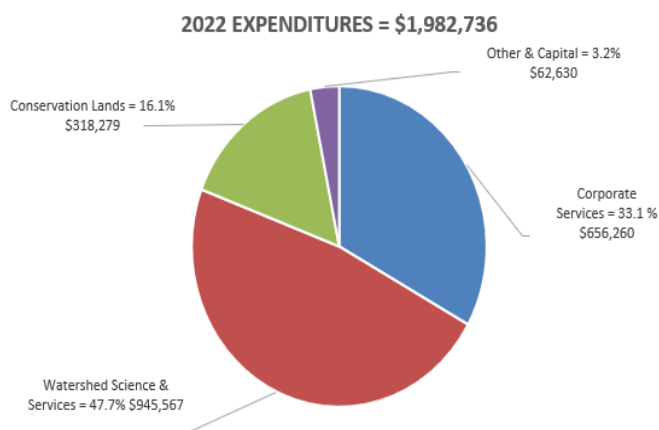
Corporate Services is an important part of day-to-day operations, providing support to all Lower Trent Conservation programs. These include: financial and human resource management; administrative and IT support; program planning and development; customer relations; partnership building; information management; GIS (mapping); and marketing and communications.

2022 Highlights

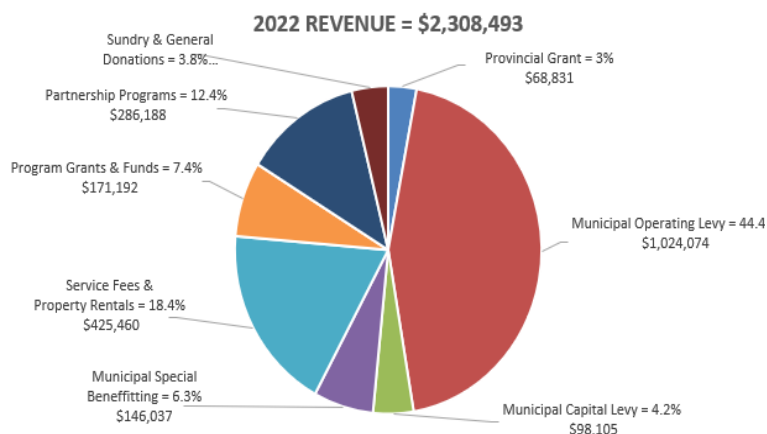
- As a support service across the whole of the organization, Corporate Services consistently requires ongoing adjustments to job activities and follow-ups for reasons of changes that have an impact on HR, Finance, Insurance, Governance, Contracts, IT, for internal work processes.
- Fulfilled targets 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.
- Prepared for changes to OMERS administration regarding eligibility and enrollment resulting from updates to the *Pension Act*.
- Budget process - introduced Board sub-committee for the development of the 2023 Budget.
- Program priorities - changes in schedules, processes, transfer of knowledge, etc.
- Contracts/Agreements - new, review and update of renewals.
- Group Benefits - online administration directly with Sun Life.
- Website redevelopment - changes in project schedules and deliverables.
- Financial electronic processes - improved customer experiences and for the programs.

2022 Financial Summary

Expenditures - \$1,982,736



Revenues - \$2,308,493



Financial summary does not include partnership programs (Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan & Drinking Water Source Protection) administered by Lower Trent Conservation.

Partnership Programs

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

Lower Trent Conservation coordinates the local administration of the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan, co-chairs the Bay of Quinte Restoration Council, and provides communications and technical support aimed at rehabilitating the Bay.

In 2022, further progress was made with addressing the environmental health issues identified for the Bay of Quinte. The final assessment report for degradation of aesthetics was submitted to the federal and provincial governments and received formal concurrence of a status change to unimpaired. Three environmental health issues remain to be addressed: restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption, eutrophication or undesirable algae and degradation of phytoplankton and zooplankton populations.

A Phosphorus Management Plan is being developed to maintain the Bay in a healthy and sustainable condition for the long-term by reducing the risk of harmful algae blooms, while maintaining a sustainable fishery. The plan addresses the needed reduction of phosphorus levels from sewage treatment plants, urban storm water, and agriculture. A long-term monitoring plan for the phosphorus management plan is under development.

Stewardship programs were delivered to assist landowners with implementation of the recommendations in the phosphorus management plan.



Drinking Water Source Protection

As the lead Source Protection Authority for the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region, Lower Trent Conservation provides technical and administrative support to the Source Protection Committee and Crowe Valley, Ganaraska Region, Kawartha-Haliburton, Lower Trent, and Otonabee-Peterborough Source Protection Authorities. Source Protection Plan policies are in effect across this vast region to protect sources of drinking water for 52 municipal drinking water systems (34 groundwater wells and 18 surface water intakes).

- Amendments to the Assessment Report were approved for new wells at Colborne and Blackstock.
- An amendment package for changes to the Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for Early Engagement (the initial consultation step). This package contains many amendments to policies and the text of the documents, that the 28-member Source Protection Committee approved, to address new technical rules and to improve the effectiveness of the policies.
- A new initiative launched this year to extend the Best Practices learned from the Source Protection Program and regional Source Protection Plans, to owners of private systems such as dug wells, to increase local knowledge about the threats to water sources, and what steps they can all take to protect them. Staff have been working with a variety of organizations and associations to help spread awareness of these Best Practices.
- Staff has been involved in several provincial groups, working with Conservation Ontario to enhance resources to enhance the Source Protection Program and provide increased awareness through the production of guidance documents and resources that can be used across the province.

Our 2022 Staff

Rhonda Bateman, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

Corporate Services

Kelly Vandette, Manager, Corporate Services
Corinne Ross, Communications Specialist
Anna Morgan, Finance & Information Technician
Jeffrey Meyer, GIS and Information Technology Specialist

Watershed Science & Services

Anne Anderson, Manager, Community Outreach & Special Projects
Janet Noyes, Manager, Development Services & Water Resources
Ashley Anastasio, Environmental Planner
Gage Comeau, Regulation and Enforcement Officer
Kim Stephens, Assistant Planning Technician
Ewa Bednarczuk, Ecology & Stewardship Specialist
Chris McLeod, Source Protection Risk Management Official/Inspector (Jan-May)
Marcus Rice, Source Protection Risk Management Official/Inspector (Sept)
Jenn McCallum, Environmental Education Technician (Jan-Apr)
Massimo Narini, Assistant Development Technician * (Jan -Aug)
Scott Robertson, Watershed Services Technician (Sept)
David Stassen, Education and Outreach Assistant +
Brooke Wright, Invasive Species Outreach Specialist +
Amanda Whitehead, Assistant Watershed Monitoring Technician +
Nathan Obach, Assistant Watershed Monitoring Technician +
Renee Richardson, Student Placement

Conservation Lands

David Beamer, Manager, Conservation Lands (Jan-May)
Chris McLeod, Conservation Lands Supervisor (May)
Luke Oomen, Conservation Lands Technician (Jan - July)
John Mahoney, Conservation Lands Technician (Sept)
Marcus Rice, Conservation Lands Maintenance Assistant *
Jett Brown, Conservation Lands Field Assistant +

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

Sarah Midlane-Jones, Community Outreach Specialist
Shan Mugalingam, Technical Specialist
Jason Jobin, Environmental Stewardship Technician *

Drinking Water Source Protection

Keith Taylor, Program Coordinator *
Trent Bos, Program Assistant*

* Contract/Seasonal Position / + Summer Student Position



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