



2010 Annual Report



“working together for a better environment”



Vision

Vision is defined as foresight. The vision of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority reflects the future desired state of our region.

"The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has as its vision, watersheds where human needs are met in balance with the needs of the natural environment."

Mission

A mission reflects action. In order to achieve our vision, it is necessary to provide leadership, effective management and ongoing communication.

Conservation Authorities are the only agencies which have a jurisdiction based on the watershed. The Authority, therefore, will provide leadership by coordinating cooperative watershed planning and program implementation. The Authority will manage, where it has jurisdiction, watershed resources through conservation, preservation, restoration and enhancement to ensure these resources are maintained while meeting the needs of the public. The Authority will provide ongoing communication and education regarding watershed resources with the purpose of gaining support for our vision.

This vision cannot be achieved in isolation. In order to minimize duplication and maximize effectiveness, partnerships will be forged, cooperation with other organizations will be fostered and through this renewed sense of commitment, we will meet the challenges which face us.

"The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has as its mission, to provide leadership through coordination of watershed planning, implementation of resource management programs and promotion of conservation awareness, in cooperation with others."



2010 Board of Directors

Betty Ann MacKinnon, Municipality of Adelaide-Metcalf
 Alan McNeil, Township of Brooke-Alvinston
 Joe Faas, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
 Tom McGregor, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
 Bill Bilton, Township of Dawn-Euphemia
 Kevin Marriott, Township of Enniskillen/Village of Oil Springs
 Carolyn Jamieson, Municipality of Lambton Shores
 Dan McMillan, Township of Middlesex Centre
 John Phair, Town of Petrolia
 Lonny Napper, Town of Plympton-Wyoming
 Larry MacKenzie, Village of Point Edward
 Andy Bruziewicz, City of Sarnia
 Terry Burrell, City of Sarnia
 Jon McEachran, City of Sarnia
 Martin Vink, Municipality of Southwest Middlesex/Village of Newbury
 Steve Arnold, Township of St. Clair
 Steve Miller, Township of St. Clair
 Tony Bruinink, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
 Norm Giffen, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
 Percival Heath, Township of Warwick

The Conservation Authority is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the member municipalities within the jurisdiction of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. The 20 Authority Directors vote annually to select a Chair, Vice Chair and Executive Committee.

The Board met six times in 2010 and is responsible for establishing the policy and procedures under which the Conservation Authority operates. Conservation Authority board members provide a crucial link between this organization and the municipalities we serve.

Executive Committee

Andy Bruziewicz, Chair
 Steve Arnold, Vice Chair
 Bill Bilton
 Terry Burrell
 Norm Giffen
 Betty Ann MacKinnon
 Larry McKenzie
 Tom McGregor
 Steve Miller

In Memory

It is with great sadness that we lost one of our conservation family in 2010.

Kathleen Graham, Visitor Services at the A. W. Campbell Conservation Area passed away after a short illness in April, 2010.

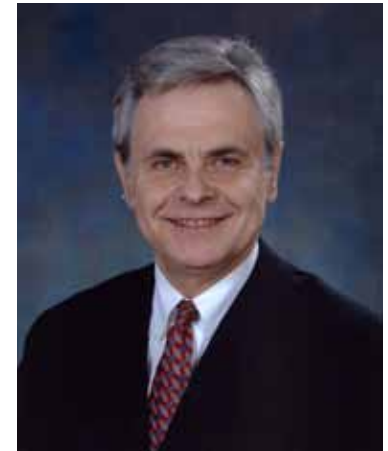
Proud recipient of the Strathroy and District Chamber of Commerce 2010 Community Involvement Award





In 1946, a group of visionaries saw their foresight and hard work realized with the passing of the Conservation Authorities Act. This act laid out a framework based on local initiative, cost sharing and management at a watershed level that has become a model for conservation worldwide. On January 12, 1961, the Sydenham Valley Conservation Authority was established with this same vision of safer and healthier watersheds built upon community participation. In response to high lake levels and devastating flooding and erosion along the shoreline, the Conservation Authority was enlarged and renamed in 1974 to include the watersheds of southern Lake Huron and the St. Clair River.

As we celebrate our last 50 years of serving our municipalities, we reflect back with pride at our accomplishments. During the initial years, the Conservation Authority focused on protecting life and property from the flooding in Wallaceburg and Dresden and acquiring flood prone lands throughout the watershed. Sixteen kilometres of dikes were constructed and in 1984, the W. Darcy McKeough Floodway, Ontario's largest flood diversion project, was completed.



Erosion protection has been constructed along some of our most vulnerable and valuable shorelines and more than 1,600 hectares of land have been acquired. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, much of the acquired lands were transformed into parks to provide natural areas, trails, campgrounds, education centres and picnic areas for the communities to enjoy. Today, Conservation Areas attract 200,000 people each year. Over 500 campsites serve visitors to the area and a place for local residents to enjoy their watershed. Each year, over 10,000 students learn about nature by visiting our Conservation Areas.

While work continued on addressing flood and erosion issues, the 1980s experienced a shift in focus to improving the overall health of the watershed by supporting land stewardship activities such as tree planting, conservation farm practices and the creation of new habitats such as wetlands, forests and prairie. Since 1980, we have planted 3.3 million trees. We also began to focus on proactive planning programs that would prevent development in flood and erosion prone areas as well as in areas where development potentially could damage crucial watershed features such as wetlands and significant natural areas.

As Conservation Authorities continue to mature and develop expertise, other government agencies look to us to help ensure a sustainable environment. The work of the Conservation Authority would not be possible without the support of the community. We are proud of our record of engaging partners to create watersheds that will sustain us for generations to come.

As we move into the future, we do so with a sense of accomplishment and a history to uphold. The challenges we face will be tackled with the same enthusiasm as our predecessors showed in laying the foundation for conservation in our region. Lessons learned from the past will help guide us as we chart our future.

I would like to thank our dedicated staff for their professional manner and conscientious effort. I would also like to thank the Directors of our Board for their commitment to our organization and to the wisdom they bring to the table. Their experience and insight are invaluable as we move forward into our next 50 years.

*Andy Bruziewicz
Chair*



Protecting Life and Property

Goals:

- To minimize the potential for loss of life, social disruption and property damage from flooding and/or erosion.
- To minimize disruption to natural riverine and shoreline processes caused by development.
- To prevent and minimize disturbance to natural habitats from development.

Lake Huron Shoreline Management Plan

The coastal engineering firm, W.F. Baird and Associates provided a draft plan to the Authority in December 2010.

About 100 people attended two open houses in July to review the work undertaken to update the Lake Huron Shoreline Management Plan. In 2006, a portion of Lambton Shores (southwest Bosanquet) was added to the area under jurisdiction of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. Lambton Shores' shoreline consists of bluffs, coastal provincially significant wetlands and dynamic beach (Ipperwash Beach) and as such is regulated by the Authority under its "Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses" Regulation.

An update to the Authority's Shoreline Management Plan is needed so that this stretch of shoreline can properly implement planning and regulation policies similar to what has been done for the remainder of the Lake Huron shoreline. Part of the plan update will also include housekeeping changes to the existing plan to ensure consistency between provincial and local documents. In early 2011, the second draft of the mapping and Plan text will be provided to municipal staff and stakeholders identified during the consultation phase.

Flood, Low Water and Shoreline Warnings

Flooding is a natural process. While the Conservation Authority has done much to reduce the risk to life and property, some flooding in developed areas is still inevitable. The Authority operates a flood warning program designed to warn residents in flood-prone areas. In addition, a Flood Action Committee including Municipal and Authority staff is convened regularly to review and update the Flood Warning Plan, enabling an organized and coordinated response in the event of changing watershed conditions. Through a network of 11 stream gauges, five snow sampling stations, ice monitoring and current meteorological data, Authority staff monitors watershed conditions by tracking and updating data on an ongoing basis to scientifically determine short and long-term trends. Should a flood be imminent, the Municipal Flood Coordinators and the media are advised and officials take appropriate action.

Flood advisories are issued when the potential for flooding exists, while flood warnings are issued when flooding is imminent. In addition to riverine flooding, the Authority issues advisories and warnings for damage which may occur due to wave action along the southern Lake Huron, St. Clair River and northeastern Lake St. Clair shorelines.

Low water conditions (Level -1) were declared for the months of September and October, 2010; the authority monitors the water levels and flow conditions in the creeks and rivers and declares a low water condition based on comparison with the average water levels and flows from the previous years.



The board of directors visit one of the high bluffs along Lake Huron during the annual project tour. Due to its high erosion rates, this bluff on Blue Point is unsafe to allow development near the top of the bluff.



Promoting Safe Development and Healthy Communities

While municipalities encourage valuable development, it is important that new houses and businesses are located safely out of areas susceptible to potential natural hazards. It is also important that any development that is completed within an area of natural hazard does not endanger adjacent landowners, or other landowners within the system.

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority is the lead agency with regard to managing development within areas of natural hazards within our area of jurisdiction, through Ontario Regulation 171/06 - "Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses" Regulations.

To help prevent future risk and to protect the interests and liability of our member municipalities, O.R. 171/06 requires landowners to obtain permission of the Authority prior to completing a development within natural hazard areas associated with watercourses and areas susceptible to river or shoreline flooding, ravine and shoreline slopes, wetlands and lands adjacent to wetlands. In most cases the Authority is able to work with the applicant to ensure that proposed developments are completed in a safe manner.

In addition, the Authority provides natural heritage and hazard comments on municipal planning matters such as zoning and official plan amendments, consents, official plans, plans of subdivision related to development in or near areas susceptible to flooding, slopes and natural areas. Authority staff also provide expertise to municipalities by reviewing the Environmental Study Reports (ESRs) which are required by the province for major new development. These comments assist the municipality in meeting its obligation to adhere to related provincial policies.

The Authority also responds to requests for property information from members of the public, lawyers and real estate agents. These inquiries are very important so that prospective buyers of property or people wishing to work in high risk areas have a prior understanding of the risks involved. A coarse review of the Authority's Regulated Areas can be accessed at www.camaps.ca. Through advancing technology, the Authority is continuously seeking and implementing methods to provide web-based natural heritage and hazard information to the public.

Planning and Regulations Activity

	2009	2010
General Inquiries	23	28
Reviewing and advising on Official Plans, Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-laws, Zoning By-law Amendments and Subdivisions	31	30
Reviewing and advising on Severances and Variances	29	37
Applications under Ontario Regulation 171/06	74	87
Inquiries under Ontario Regulation 171/06	201	157
Property Inquiries	53	70
Review of Environmental Studies and Development Assessments	14	13
Total	425	422

The above activity comparison reflects the following:

- lower numbers in regulation inquiries due to directing the public to www.camaps.ca website to see regulation maps on-line
- overall increase from 2009 - 2010 reflects economic recovery in the latter part of 2010



Guthrie Park, St. Clair Township

Work is continuing on the shoreline protection at Guthrie Park in St. Clair Township. This project which started in 2008 with an initial 265 metres of shore protection, will replace a failing steel sheet pile wall with a revetment comprised of stepped armour stone and sloped rip rap. The second phase, completed in 2009 provided an additional 235 metres of protection. In 2010, work began on the final phase with an additional 200 metres of protection. This project is being coordinated by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and is funded through the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (Phases 1 and 2), Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (Phases 1, 2 and 3), Ontario Ministry of Environment - Canada-Ontario Agreement (Phases 1, 2 and 3), Industry Canada/FedDev Ontario - Community Adjustment Fund (Phases 2 and 3) and the Township of St. Clair (Phases 1, 2 and 3). In total, 700 metres of shoreline was protected at a cost of \$2,447,000.

Fish Surveys of St. Clair River Shoreline Softening Projects

In October 2010, St. Clair Conservation and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) sampled fishes at three shoreline softening sites (Guthrie Park in Corunna, Mission Park in Sarnia and Cathcart Park in Sombra) in the St. Clair River. The information generated from these surveys will be used to evaluate the benefit of these projects and will contribute to the Class Environmental Assessment at Cathcart Park. Specialized nets were used in order to sample the river bottom where Species at Risk fishes of the St. Clair River are most likely to inhabit. Spotted Sucker (considered Special Concern federally and Threatened provincially), Channel Darter (considered Threatened federally and provincially), and Northern Madtom (considered Endangered provincially and federally) are all bottom dwelling species known to be found in the general vicinity of the area sampled.



Authority Receives Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Grants

The SCRCA received \$42,500 in infrastructure funding for 2010-2011, which it shared with municipalities on a number of projects:

- W. Darcy McKeough Dam Diversion Berm Erosion Protection
- ARDA Dykes Hazard Tree Removal, Wren Line
- Phase III - Guthrie Park Erosion Control Shore Protection Revitalization
- Petrolia Dam - Flank Erosion Study
- Phase I - Cathcart Park Erosion Protection Revitalization Study

The following projects, funded in previous years, were completed in 2010:

- Guthrie Park Shore Protection Revitalization Phase II
- Preliminary design - Cathcart Park Erosion Protection Revitalization Study
- ARDA / Running Creek Dykes Erosion Repairs and Vegetation Removal
- W. Darcy McKeough Dam - Dam Safety Review
- W. Darcy McKeough Dam - Drain Outlet Erosion Repair

W. Darcy McKeough Floodway

The W. Darcy McKeough Floodway, located 12 km north of Wallaceburg, was built to protect the community of Wallaceburg and portions of the former Townships of Chatham and Sombra from severe flooding. Since 1984, the McKeough Floodway has been operated six times including February, 2009. In 2010, a number of maintenance and repair items were completed on the Floodway:

- Waterproofing and crack monitoring was performed on the floodway
- Concrete damage on the floodway was repaired which had resulted from unauthorized activities at the drop structure
- Continued to deal with vandalism by sand blasting spray paint from cement walls and attempting to restrict unauthorized access by ATVs
- continued weed control in channel bottom and side slopes
- removed debris jams
- several catch basins and rock chutes installed/repared to reduce erosion of channel side slopes



Conserving Soil and Water

Goals:

- To enhance the water resources of the region by encouraging those land uses that are compatible with the natural function and capability of the water and related watershed resources.
- To encourage the adoption of land management practices that will allow for the sustained use of water and related resources.

Grants Awarded to Conservation Authority to Help Landowners

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority received two grants to continue its work in protecting Species at Risk.

- \$120,000 was granted to the Conservation Authority to continue its work on aquatic Species at Risk in the Sydenham River watershed. The grant from the federal Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk will be used to subsidize stewardship projects for local landowners such as fencing cattle from watercourses, tree planting and stream buffers. The grant will also be used to continue our classroom program on rare species, and provide information to the public about Species at Risk in the Sydenham River watershed.
- A \$50,000 grant from the Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Fund will be used to subsidize similar stewardship projects for local landowners in 2011.



Healthy Watersheds

Water is a precious resource. The Conservation Authority's Healthy Watersheds Program is an initiative that provides technical and financial assistance to improve and protect rural water quality. The SCRCA actively seeks grants that will bring dollars into the region to support the conservation efforts of landowners. Grants supporting the program in 2010 include the Clean Water Project for Middlesex County and the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk for the Sydenham River watershed. In 2010, 7 projects were approved for a total grant of \$10,000 for the Clean Water Project plus 25 projects in the Kettle Point Intake Protection Zone for a total of \$200,000.

Over the last ten years, the Conservation Authority has distributed more than \$1.9 million in grants to landowners which has resulted in 673 projects worth \$6.5 million. The projects include such Best Management Practices as streambank stabilization, tree planting, wetland creation, livestock fencing from watercourses, well decommissioning, riparian buffers and replacement of faulty septic systems.





Private Land Tree Planting Program

This year 77,000 trees, shrubs and poplar cuttings were planted on private lands. About 10,000 were planted by 50 landowners. Authority crews planted another 67,000 trees for 25 landowners. The Authority has planted more than 3.3 million trees since 1980.

Trees provide a host of benefits including protecting soil from erosion, protecting water quality, flood control, increased crop yields adjacent to windbreaks, oxygen production and wildlife habitat as well as a more beautiful landscape.

Tree Maintenance

For a tree planting project to be successful, maintenance of the trees is essential. The Conservation Authority offers a service to provide weed control for newly planted seedlings for three years. In 2010, 290,000 trees were treated with herbicide to prevent competition from weeds.

TD Friends of the Environment Foundation Supports Propagating Local Tree Seed

The St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation received a donation of \$1,380 from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation to support a community project to propagate local tree seed. Trees grown from local seeds have a better chance of survival because they come from trees adapted to local conditions. This project involved collecting local tree seed and propagating them in greenhouses. The trees grown will be used by the Conservation Authority in future tree planting projects. Other participating partners in the project include Lambton College, Petrolia Community Living and local elementary and secondary schools.

Woodlot Management Services

Qualified forestry staff provides woodlot management and marking services to landowners. This is an excellent option for landowners who would like independent advice or an appraisal of their woodlot. Management plans are created that meet the specific goals of the landowner. Proper silviculture techniques and "Good Forest Practices" are encouraged to ensure the long-term health of the woodlot while meeting the needs of the landowner. In 2010:

- Three timber marks were completed for harvest (25 hectares)
- Management plans were completed for 2 woodlots (15 hectares)

Enbridge Launches Large Habitat Project

In 2010, Enbridge announced that it will partner with the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority in creating two Habitat Restoration sites in Lambton County over a five to six year period commencing in 2011. Enbridge is committing 185 acres of its lands and will invest \$160,000 over the next five or six years with the Conservation Authority.

Tree Planting at Twin Creeks Landfill, Warwick Township

The Conservation Authority is working with Waste Management Canada to develop a natural barrier along the property boundary of the expanding Twin Creek Landfill site in Warwick Township. The final section of the screening berm was completed in September 2010. Approximately 850 large stock spruce trees and 380 larger stock deciduous trees have been planted on the screening berm and in 2011 the final section is scheduled for larger tree and shrub planting in order to complete the project. This work will help to provide a buffer for the landfill and will add wildlife habitat to the site.

Drain Vegetation Control Program

Authority staff worked with municipal drainage superintendents on the maintenance of 30 kilometres of drains in St. Clair Township as well as Southwest Middlesex. The herbicide applications assist in controlling woody vegetation and phragmites, decreasing the frequency of drain clean-outs and therefore reducing sedimentation caused by the clean-outs.





Aquatic Species at Risk

The Sydenham River continues to be a hot spot in Canada for rare species. Twenty-four Sydenham aquatic species have been designated by the federal Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) as Endangered, Threatened or of Special Concern. Provincial Endangered Species legislation recognizes seven fish species from the Sydenham. Rare fish like Pugnose Shiner and Grass Pickerel are also found in watercourses other than the Sydenham, such as smaller streams in Chatham-Kent. Many of the turtles and snakes in this region are also provincially rare, and staff appreciate receiving reports on these species. A private citizen photographed a Spiny Softshell Turtle basking beside Lake Huron, which is our first record for the Lake Huron watersheds. The most endangered group of organisms in North America and in the Sydenham is the mussel group. Ten of the mussel species which are known from the Sydenham have been designated by COSEWIC as Endangered. An additional 14 mussel species are candidates for review by COSEWIC for nationally-rare status, implying that 23 species or 68% of the mussel species known from the Sydenham River are in need of conservation action.

The Conservation Authority used \$144,000 from the Habitat Stewardship Program of the federal government to carry out habitat improvement and community awareness and outreach in the Sydenham River Watershed in 2010. \$40,000 from the provincial Species at Risk Fund also helped with habitat improvement. The majority of these funds were available to farmers and rural non-farming residents to help them implement stewardship projects.

These funds helped to finance the following projects:

Newsletter - The annual Species at Risk newsletter was distributed to 66,000 homes throughout the region in early April. The newsletter highlights the activities of the Recovery Team as they work to protect the many aquatic species currently at risk in the Sydenham River watershed. Copies of the newsletter can be found on the website at www.sydenhamriver.on.ca or by contacting the Conservation Authority.

In the classroom - Students participated in programs which brought the issue of local Species at Risk into the classroom.

On television - A public service announcement was aired on the A Channel over a two-week period with funds from the St. Clair Region and Upper Thames River Conservation Authorities.

On the farm - \$95,000 was provided to landowners to help them implement 19 conservation projects which help improve the quality of the Sydenham River and its tributaries. Projects include such initiatives as tree planting, streambank stabilization and creation or enhancement of wetlands.

2010 Turtle Survey

This year staff and volunteers completed the ninth annual turtle survey on the East Branch of the Sydenham River. Surveys began in late May and continued throughout June with several sections of the river surveyed by different groups of volunteers. Ultimately, surveys extended from Shiloh Line Bridge to Dawn Mills. Each canoe was outfitted with a GPS unit, binoculars, camera, and field sheets so the turtles and nesting sites could be easily seen and properly documented. Surveyors were specifically looking for two turtle Species at Risk, the spiny softshell turtle which is listed as Threatened and the northern map turtle which is listed as a species of Special Concern. However, other turtles that have not been listed as a Species at Risk were seen and recorded such as the painted turtle and the snapping turtle. Staff and volunteers were able to spot 31 spiny softshell turtles, 119 northern map turtles, and 62 other turtles. Spiny softshell turtles continue to use exposed river banks for basking while sand and gravel areas near the water are needed for nesting.

Watershed Report Cards

In 2008, the Conservation Authority completed a set of Watershed Report Cards for the 14 subwatersheds in the St. Clair region. These Report Cards evaluated key indicators of watershed health, using provincial standards. The complete set of the first Watershed Report Cards is on our website at www.scrca.on.ca.

The grades indicated the St. Clair Region had a C grade for Surface Water Quality and a D grade for Forest Condition, using standards developed by Conservation Ontario and the Ministry of the Environment. Our grades were similar to the neighbouring Thames River and Ausable River watersheds.

This region has been affected by urban, industrial and agricultural development but it supports an extraordinary number of rare plant and animal species. In the St. Clair Region over 80 endangered, threatened or special concern species are recognized under federal or provincial legislation. Likewise, although the region has very little forest cover, it contains many significant tree and bird species that do not thrive in most of Ontario. Local solutions were recommended including planting trees to increase the size of woodlands, developing more streamside buffers and implementing Environmental Farm Plans

The St. Clair Region hosts a mosaic of farmland and forests, urban areas, industrialization and natural areas with extraordinary biological diversity. Residents, agencies and municipalities must act to protect and improve this region of Canada which is "uniquely St. Clair".

As we work toward a second Report Card, the guidelines have been revised to include more parameters and modified standards. Landowners and municipalities continue to implement conservation programs. Conservation Authority monitoring and reporting may indicate improvements, or may indicate our grades continue to need improvement.



St. Clair River Area of Concern

The Area of Concern can be described as the St. Clair River from the Blue Water Bridge to the north shore of Mitchell's Bay on Lake St. Clair and includes the immediate drainage basin of the St. Clair River. This area is one of 43 AOCs the International Joint Commission (IJC) identified around the Great Lakes where there were known environmental problems. In each area, groups of people are working together to implement Remedial Action Plans (RAP) and take action so the area can be rehabilitated and removed from the list of Areas of Concern. The Conservation Authority is playing an important role in this plan by coordinating and managing projects. Delisting the St. Clair River as an Area of Concern under the Canada-US Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement is the ultimate goal of Ontario, Canada, and all local stakeholders.

Delisting Criteria

The criteria used to decide if the river has been sufficiently rehabilitated and can be delisted were developed in 1995 and needed updating. A working group of the Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) reviewed the criteria for the uses that were judged to be impaired and proposed new updated criteria. The new criteria are being reviewed by RAP stakeholders and First Nations with the view to finalizing them early in 2011.

Fish Tainting

A report summarizing all of the studies and surveys completed between 1995 and 2010 was distributed to stakeholders and First Nations for review. The report concludes that fish tainting is not a beneficial use impairment in the St. Clair River. Once the report is finalized in early 2011, a request will be made to re-designate it as unimpaired.



Contaminated Sediment Management

One of the aspects of the river that has been impaired is the contamination of sediments by historic releases of municipal and industrial contaminants. Agencies and stakeholders have made progress in cleaning up this problem. Only three pockets downstream of Sarnia require further work. Experts are developing options to manage these three areas of interest. Further studies have been proposed and work started to fine-tune management scenarios to answer the questions of what else should be done. A scan to locate any physical obstructions on the river bottom was completed in 2010. In 2011, more survey work will determine precisely the dimensions and location of areas and the levels of contamination. Following this study, preferred management options will be proposed for public consultation in 2011-2012.



E. coli Monitoring

St. Clair Conservation continued with the second summer of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) monitoring at eight nearshore sites along the St. Clair River from the Blue Water Bridge in Sarnia to Marshy Creek just north of Port Lambton. Additionally, in 2010, an aesthetics survey was added to the protocol. This monitoring, funded by the Ministry of the Environment, is used to evaluate whether there are still Beneficial Use Impairments related to beach closings and degradation of aesthetics in the St. Clair River Area of Concern. The 2010 sampling indicates that the majority of the sites have *E. coli* below the Ontario recreational guideline of 100 cfu/100mL. *E. coli* concentrations were generally lowest in the upstream sample locations. As communities, agencies and governments work towards delisting the St. Clair River AOC, it is likely that monitoring will continue into 2011.



Drinking Water Source Protection

Water is critical to all aspects of our lives and it is important that we ensure there is a safe and reliable source of water for all our uses – now and in the future. Our municipal drinking water comes from lakes, rivers, streams or underground sources (aquifers) located across the province. Clean and plentiful water supplies are among the most important natural resources. In our region, most municipalities rely on piped water from the Great Lakes. This does not lessen the importance of protecting water source areas within our watersheds. We need to be proactive to protect our watersheds and, as a result, the Great Lakes upon which we depend.

In this area, the Upper Thames River, Lower Thames Valley and St. Clair Region Conservation Authorities have partnered together to coordinate the development of Source Protection Plans for our watersheds. We are committed to work with our municipalities, other stakeholders and the public to develop Source Protection Plans that serve to protect our drinking water while taking into account the other needs of our communities.

The 22-member Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Committee represents a wide range of interests and brings a considerable breadth of knowledge and experience to the table. As laid out in the regulations, one-third of the committee is composed of municipal members; members representing the major sectors in the region are to make up one-third of the committee; and environmental non-government organizations, recreation, academics, landowners and individuals make up the remaining one-third. The Minister of the Environment appointed Robert Bedggood as chair of the Thames-Sydenham and Region Source Protection Committee.

The responsibility of the Source Protection Committee is to guide the development of local Source Protection Plans. An important part of this process is public and stakeholder involvement. Beginning prior to the legislation being passed, significant consultation has taken place. The initial focus was on committee selection. Once the committee was in place consultation focused on the development of the Terms of Reference. In 2009 and 2010, the focus shifted to consultation for the Assessment Report. This involved both local consultation with landowners living within the Intake Protection Zones and consultation across the region. Across the region, 37 Open Houses were held with over 650 people attending.

Over the next two years, there will be a number of additional opportunities to become involved through open houses, forums and working groups. In addition, information will be provided through publications such as this one and through our website at www.sourcewaterprotection.on.ca. Information on committee meetings including notices, meeting minutes and reports can also be accessed through the website.

St. Clair Region Source Protection Area Assessment Report Submitted

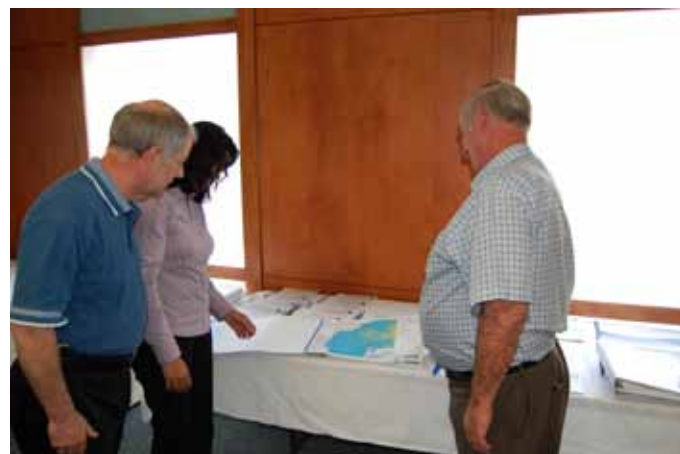
The Proposed Assessment Report for the St. Clair Region Source Protection Area was submitted to the province for approval.

The Report includes:

- the identification of vulnerable areas associated with municipal drinking water sources;
- the types of activities which would be considered threats in those vulnerable areas;
- any water quality issues associated with the raw (untreated) water to municipal drinking water systems which could be addressed through source protection planning;
- a water budget which assesses areas where the quantity of water available for the municipal drinking water source may be stressed;
- general background material which might be useful in developing a Source Protection Plan.

Seven open houses have been held in the St. Clair Source Protection Area. These open houses provided information on the vulnerability and threats assessment of proposed Intake Protection Zones for the Lambton Area Water Supply System, Petrolia Water Treatment Plant and Wallaceburg Water Treatment Plant. In addition, information on highly vulnerable aquifers and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas was included. Almost 4,400 individual invitations were mailed to those living within the Intake Protection Zones. Approximately 120 people attended the open houses. Comments received were invaluable as the Source Protection Committee worked on various drafts of the report.

Based on input received from the province, minor revisions to the Proposed Assessment Report are underway with re-submission in February 2011.





First Nation Joins Source Protection

The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation passed a Band Council Resolution to have its intake on Lake Huron included through the Clean Water Act. This required the cooperation between two Source Protection Regions: the Thames-Sydenham and Region and the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley. The First Nation falls within the St. Clair Region SPA.

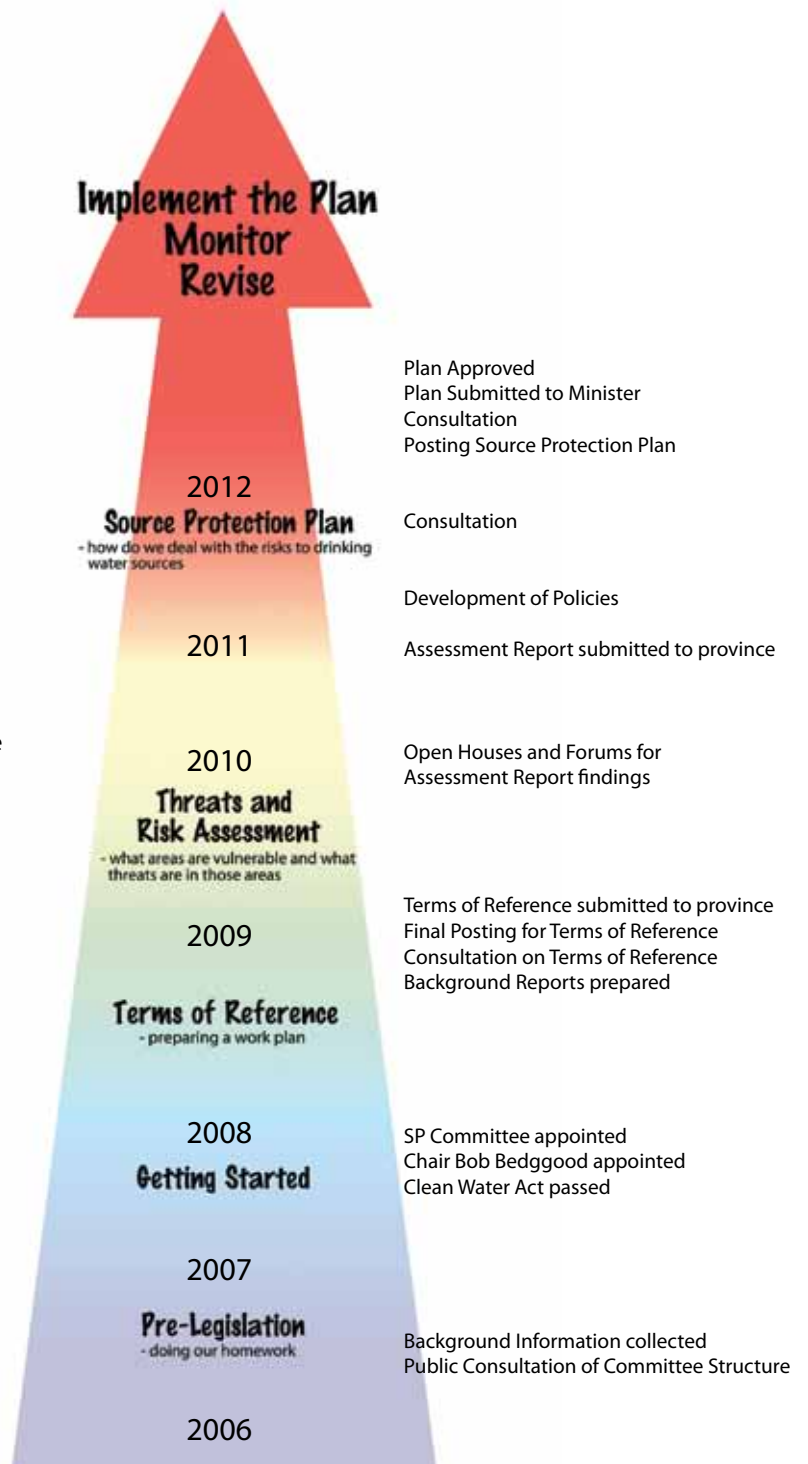
Upon receiving the Band Council Resolution late in 2010, staff from both regions worked quickly to engage the community so that they could take advantage of the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. Within one month, 25 projects were approved for funding. Total Grant approved through the Thames-Sydenham and Region SPR was \$116,400.

What are Source Protection Plans?

Assessment Reports form the basis for developing Source Protection Plans. Source Protection Plans will contain policies that manage significant threats to municipal supplies of drinking water and ensure that no new significant threats can occur. In addition, the Source Protection Committee may develop policies to address moderate and low threats to municipal drinking water sources as well as Highly Vulnerable Aquifers and Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas. Policies to monitor the progress of Plan will also be a part of the Source Protection Plan.

There are many tools available to accomplish the job. Some threats could be reduced through voluntary action by landowners, or with assistance from subsidy and cost-share programs. Other threats may become the target of educational activities. Some threats may be addressed through regulatory requirements. Where regulatory tools are used, existing regulatory processes (such as permits, approvals, zoning bylaws, official plan amendments) will be used where possible. Risk Management Plans are a new tool that allows the municipality and the landowner to negotiate a risk reduction which satisfies the Source Protection Plan.

Over the next year and a half, the Source Protection Committee will be developing the Plan with extensive public and stakeholder input. The Plan must be submitted to the Province by August 2012.





Water Quality Monitoring

The surface water sampling program involves sampling monthly from April to November at 19 locations in our region including Shashawandah, Hickory, Cow, Talfourd, Baby, Clay Creeks, and Bear Creek Drain in geographic Dover, and 12 sites on the Sydenham River. This program is part of the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and also part of the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality Monitoring. Analysis of the samples is financed by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

Water chemistry is analyzed by the MOE labs for parameters such as nutrients, pesticides, suspended solids and heavy metals. The Middlesex-London Health Unit analyzes eight water samples from the Sydenham River for the fecal bacteria *E. coli*. Generally, 2010 water quality shows similar results to those from 2005-2009. Nitrate levels continue to be near the Provincial Standard, while Phosphorous levels generally exceed the standard. *E. coli* levels exceed the Provincial standards, but generally meet the less stringent USEPA advisory standard. Surface water monitoring helps the Authority and the MOE track water quality issues that exist or may arise in the SCRCA watershed. Some best management practices that help improve surface water include repairing septic systems, increasing riparian buffers, repairing areas subject to erosion and fencing livestock from rivers and streams.

The health of the aquatic habitats is also assessed by sampling the invertebrate organisms such as insects, worms and crustaceans which live on the bottom or benthos of the watercourse. Benthic samples were collected at a representative site in each of the 14 Watershed Report Card areas and the results will provide an indication of the water quality for the next Report Card.



Advice about Fish Habitat

Municipalities have a legal responsibility to work in accordance with Fisheries and Oceans Canada requirements when municipal projects could impact fish habitat. Potential impacts often arise when municipal drain maintenance is proposed. A long-term agreement between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and St. Clair Region Conservation Authority allows Authority staff to work directly with municipalities providing fish habitat advice for municipal drainage projects. This agreement helps protect fish habitat while streamlining the review process for municipalities.

Many of the 6,000 kilometres of watercourses in the St. Clair region provide habitat for fish. Our region has over 80 species of fish, including 7 Species at Risk and many game fish including walleye, pike, bass, sunfish and rainbow trout. Even the small watercourses provide important feeding and nursery habitat for minnows, shiners and darters. Projects which may affect these watercourses include bridge repairs, culvert replacements and municipal drain maintenance. In some cases, special conditions can be applied to a project which allow it to proceed but protect important nursery habitat, such as timing the work so it does not interfere with spawning or leaving mature vegetation on one side of the watercourse to provide shade and cover. In 2010 St. Clair Conservation staff screened over 169 proposals which could affect fish habitat in our region. Where there was potentially serious impact on fish habitat, proposals were referred to Fisheries and Oceans Canada for review. The majority of the projects required only letters of advice to the proponent, recommending measures to avoid negative impacts on fish habitat.

Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network

In an effort to better understand Ontario's groundwater resources, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment implemented the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network to monitor water quality and quantity in a number of test wells. The Network is a cooperative effort of the Conservation Authorities in Ontario, on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment. Since the program's inception in 2001, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has contributed ten groundwater wells to the network. Since then, one well was decommissioned. Water levels are monitored at the nine remaining sites. Water quality of eight wells was sampled in the fall of 2010. The region's groundwater analyses can be compared to treated drinking water standards. Over four years of annual sampling, water quality meets all Provincial standards, except that there are fluoride and sodium exceedances at three locations. These exceedances are believed to be from naturally occurring sources. It is important to note that these wells are used to monitor the natural groundwater and do not supply drinking water.



Conservation Lands

Goal:

- To preserve, restore, enhance and sustain natural resources on Authority land and to demonstrate proper land use, development and land management practices in balance with the need to provide recreation opportunities for the residents of the region.

Lands owned by St. Clair Conservation are an important part of the land available for recreation in this region. Fifty-five percent of all public outdoor recreation lands in the region are owned by the Authority. The Authority and the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation own more than 1,800 hectares of land including beaches along Lake Huron, campgrounds, day use parks, wetlands and forests. A wide range of recreation activities are available on these lands including swimming, boating, hiking, bird watching, camping, fishing and hunting.

Camping

The three campgrounds were very successful this year. Seasonal camping revenue increased 4.5% over the previous year and overnight camping revenue increased by 2%. With 522 serviced sites and 393 full or half-time seasonal campers, these three campgrounds provided a significant contribution to the local economies. Including overnight campers, the campgrounds were usually filled to capacity in July and August.

For more information on camping, visit www.scrca.on.ca/CA_Camping.htm

Playground Equipment Donated by Foundation

The St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation donated \$30,000 to upgrade playground equipment at the three regional campgrounds. This equipment is very popular with the families that visit the Conservation Area. Through support from the Foundation, recreation has been greatly enhanced at the campgrounds including mini-golf, frisbee-golf, basketball courts and recreation centres.

A Lake View Experience

Two Conservation Areas on Lake Huron provide valuable public access to the Lake. Along the shore of southern Lake Huron, public access is extremely limited. The Highland Glen Conservation Area is 11 hectares of beautiful forested ravine land and a 600 metre beach along Lake Huron. A boat ramp and safe harbour have been constructed providing the only public boat access to the Lake north of Sarnia in our region. Each year the Authority dredges the launch basin to allow for adequate draft for the boats. The 4 hectare Charles J. McEwen Conservation Area features 200 metres of beach and is a popular place for group picnics.



Highland Glen Conservation Area



C. J. McEwen Conservation Area



Management of Lambton County Forests

Based on the Conservation Authority's experience in managing natural areas, The County of Lambton has contracted out the management of a number of its properties to the Conservation Authority.

- Lambton County Heritage Forest
- Perch Creek Habitat Management Area
- Marthaville Habitat Management Area
- Bowen's Creek Habitat Management Area
- Moore Landfill Buffer Lands
- Szabo Forest
- Meadowview Villa Forest (added in 2010)

In 2010, The Conservation Authority used GPS to document the location of trails at the Lambton County Heritage Forest with the purpose of developing a strategy for closing sections and redesigning other sections. Inadequate fencing was replaced to protect the dune system along Port Franks Road. Meadowview Villa was added to the list of properties to manage on behalf of the County. Plans for a multi-year tree planting program of 6 acres at Bowen's Creek have been completed with planting to start in the spring of 2011.



West Nile Virus Control

Lambton County Community Health Services contracted the Conservation Authority to undertake the Lambton County Larvicide Program as part of its overall West Nile Virus Control Program. All work was carried out by SCRCA staff over a period from July 3 to August 13. Approximately 15,000 catch basins were treated in Sarnia Lambton on two separate rounds of application. The catch basins were treated with a pelletized larvicide called methoprene. The treatment is designed to prevent mosquito larvae from becoming adult biting flies and reduce the risk of spreading West Nile Virus throughout the community.

McKeough Upstream Lands

St. Clair Conservation owns 746 hectares of land upstream of the McKeough Floodway. This land was purchased as part of the McKeough project in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The land includes agricultural land, forest, floodplain and wetlands. Most of the upstream lands were in agriculture. Over the years, some of the erosion prone lands and other marginal lands have been planted with trees, shrubs and tallgrass prairie. Today, 343 hectares are forested including natural forests, plantations and memorial forests. In addition, erosion prevention measures have been installed at a number of sites. These public lands are managed to provide a variety of benefits. To ensure the wisest use of these lands, the Authority works with the public and private sectors by entering into various lease arrangements including agricultural, residential and other resource management leases including arrangements with Ducks Unlimited, Rural Lambton Stewardship Network, Nicholls Funeral Home, Farmers and Friends Conservation Club and 24 agricultural leases with 12 local farmers.



New interpretive signs installed at the W. Darcy McKeough Floodway.



Conservation Area Development Summary

Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area

Township of Enniskillen

145 serviced sites with 112 seasonal campers

- entrance and lobby to main education building renovated
- new steel roof installed on the main education building
- playground equipment installed with funds donated by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation

Warwick Conservation Area

Township of Warwick

232 serviced sites with 178 seasonal campers

- 14 campsites serviced with water and hydro
- major renovations to washroom building
- playground equipment installed with funds donated by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation

A. W. Campbell Conservation Area

Township of Brooke-Alvinston and Municipality of Southwest Middlesex

145 serviced sites with 94 seasonal campers

- service to 11 campsites upgraded with new underground hydro and new receptacles
- visitor services building renovated with new kitchen cupboards and sink for camper activities
- new steel roof installed on the main campground washroom
- playground equipment installed with funds donated by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation

Wawanosh Wetlands Conservation Area

City of Sarnia

- new sign erected on Highway 402
- repairs to viewing tower and additional benches installed along trails

Tony Stranak Conservation Area

Municipality of Chatham-Kent (Dresden)

- the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation continued to accept donations for the development of the arboretum by the Dresden and District Horticultural Society

Shetland Conservation Area

Township of Dawn-Euphemia

- the Township of Dawn-Euphemia operates this area

Coldstream Conservation Area

Township of Middlesex Centre

- The Enviro-Friends of Coldstream, a volunteer organization, carries out the regular operation of the area

Highland Glen Conservation Area

Town of Plympton-Wyoming

- harbour dredged to provide safe boat access

Strathroy Conservation Area

Township of Strathroy-Caradoc

- access points for water trail improved with funding from RBC - partnership with the municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
- in partnership with the Strathroy Rotary Club, new trails were constructed linking the Conservation Area to the Rotary Trail
- 4 new fishing access points constructed at the Strathroy Wetlands Conservation Area



New entrance to the Education Centre at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area



Viewing area at the Wawanosh Wetlands Conservation Area



Conservation Areas	Camping			swimming pool	beach	picnic shelter	play ground	trails	natural area no facilities	phone
	serviced lots	seasonal and overnight	group							
A.W. Campbell	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		847-5357
Warwick	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		849-6770
L.C. Henderson	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		882-2280
Coldstream	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		666-0461
Shetland		✓	✓			✓	✓			692-5148
Wawanosh Wetlands						✓		✓		245-3710
Highland Glen					✓	✓				245-3710
C. J. McEwen					✓	✓				245-3710
Clark Wright								✓		245-3710
Bridgeview						✓	✓	✓		882-2350
Strathroy								✓		245-3710
Esli G. Dodge						✓	✓	✓		786-2335
Crothers						✓	✓	✓		360-1998
Tony Stranak						✓	✓	✓		360-1998
McKeough Floodway								✓		892-3824
Management Areas										
Sinclair									✓	245-3710
Huff Woodlot									✓	245-3710
Perch Creek								✓		245-3710
Moore								✓		245-3710
Marthaville								✓		245-3710
Harrison Woodlot								✓	✓	245-3710
Bates Conservation Lands									✓	245-3710
Gawne									✓	245-3710
Maples Woodlot									✓	245-3710
Reid Property									✓	245-3710





Communications

The Conservation Authority is committed to engaging the community in conservation issues through a variety of means including publications, events and programs.

Conservation For Kids

The Authority provides young people with the opportunity to discover how the Conservation Authority manages the region's natural resources. The program is designed to create an enthusiasm for our natural heritage which will carry over into the child's adult life. The Authority offers outdoor and in-class programs. The majority of the outdoor conservation education programs are operated out of the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area near Petrolia. They are also offered at the Wawanosh Wetlands, Strathroy Wetlands and the A.W. Campbell Conservation Areas and at the Dow Wetlands. Many of the education programs are supported by donations from businesses and organizations. A complete list is included in the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation's section of this report. In total, 11,193 students participated in conservation education classes in 2010.

Sarnia Lambton Environmental Association Sponsors Programs

River Bottom Critters is an in-class program, sponsored by the Sarnia Lambton Environmental Association (SLEA), which gives students a first hand opportunity to see how river bottom animals can be used to determine the quality of the aquatic health of a watercourse. 3,024 students poked and probed through the mud and discovered the wealth of life which thrives on the St. Clair River bottom. SLEA also sponsors *Go With the Flow* which is a groundwater program taught by Authority staff in the classroom. The program introduced 1,284 grade 4 - 8 students to the fundamentals of groundwater hydrology and the importance of protecting our groundwater resources.

Discovering Wetlands at Dow

Through a donation from Dow Chemical Canada, the Conservation Authority provided outdoor education classes and presentations at the Dow Wetlands in the Township of St. Clair. In 2010, Authority education staff helped 1,072 students learn how wetlands can be created and how wetlands improve water quality.

Species at Risk

Thanks to the support of Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, the Conservation Authority has developed an in-class program which introduces students to the topic of endangered species. By highlighting local aquatic Species at Risk, students learn basic terminology related to endangered species, factors that cause a species population to decline and what steps can be taken to restore healthy populations. In addition to this program, messages about Species at Risk have been incorporated into the other education programs.

Children's Water Festival

The Conservation Authority participated in the Chatham-Kent Children's Water Festival. 1,195 students visited the Festival at Wilson C.A. in Chatham. Prior to the event, four days were spent training volunteer High School students on how to run the activity centres. All 42 activity centres were run by the volunteers. The Festival provided a great opportunity for students to learn about history of water, stresses on our water and conservation of this precious resource.

Conservation Scholarships Awarded

The Conservation Scholarship program rewards graduating High School students continuing their post secondary studies in a conservation related field based on their academic achievement and their demonstrated interest and involvement with the environment. In total, \$3,000 was awarded across the St. Clair region this year.

Allanah Vokes from Lambton Central Collegiate and Vocational Institute and Caitlyn Weir from Strathroy District Collegiate Institute were selected as the recipients of the 2010 A.W. Campbell Memorial Scholarships and each received \$1,000.

Stipe Vicente Jelovcic from St. Patrick's High School won the \$500 Tony Stranak Conservation Scholarship.

Allison Taziar from Lambton Kent Composite School won the \$500 Mary Jo Arnold Conservation Scholarship.

The scholarships are made possible through trust funds established by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation and its donors.



Events - Experience our Watershed

Sydenham River Canoe Race

The Sydenham River Canoe Race has greeted the spring for the last 37 years. In 2010, 136 people in 73 canoes and kayaks participated in one of twelve classes ranging from the very competitive 19 km expert class to the relaxing downstream 8 km recreation class. The fastest 19 km time was 1 hour 29 minutes by Dave Johnston and Rene Boogeman. Thanks to generous participants and their sponsors, \$4,500 was raised for Outdoor Education. The Florence Optimist Team of Jeff Rickman and Mike O'Neill won the trophy for the most money raised.

Trails Open - A Geocaching Adventure

Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunt which uses a global positioning system (GPS) unit to locate a hidden cache (treasure). Two events were held where the participants explored local Conservation Areas and discover caches. At the Wawanosh Wetlands Conservation Area, another twist was added where caches were only accessible by canoe. Over sixty people explored the marshes at Wawanosh in the hunt for hidden treasure. This event was a fundraiser for the Huron House Boys Home.

Trails Open - Paddle Day

Working with a local canoe outfitter, Canoe Water Adventuring, the Conservation Authority held a day of canoeing. This was an opportunity to introduce the Strathroy community to the new water trail established along the Sydenham River in town.

Maple Syrup Festival

Over 2,000 people visited the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area to experience the sights, sounds and smells of one of the oldest industries in Canada. The 38th Annual Maple Syrup Festival was held on March 20 - 21. Visitors were able to witness the First Nation method of boiling maple syrup by placing hot stones into the cold sap. Early and late pioneer methods of making syrup and demonstrations of modern syrup production were also highlighted. The Alvinston Firemen's Association provided the traditional pancake and sausage meals at the Alvinston Community Centre.

Volunteers Clean Parks and Plant Trees for Earth Day

Students from six Strathroy schools scoured the parks in Strathroy, cleaning up garbage and planting trees and shrubs. About 250 volunteers took part in this annual event. Strathroy-Caradoc staff, several businesses and organizations participated in the project which was organized by the Conservation Authority and Fanshawe College. Sansin, a local business, supplied funds to purchase trees and Langs Bus Lines donated a bus to help transport students to and from the parks. The Strathroy Lion's Club looked after refreshments.





Conservation Awards

The Conservation Authority offers Conservation Awards to deserving individuals and groups who have contributed to the environmental wellbeing of our region.

Catherine Creber

Catherine began her career at Dow in Sarnia as a young engineer. Her name is most frequently associated with environmental remediation efforts in Sarnia, across Canada, as well as parts of the United States. Catherine advocated for innovative remediation technologies including phytoremediation (remediation using plants) which led to the development of The Dow Wetlands project. The Wetlands have evolved into an 80 acre sanctuary for plant and wildlife located adjacent to an urban and industrial area.

Catherine has been a key supporter of the Conservation Authority's Outdoor Education Program for the last 10 years. This association has been tied to the development of the Dow Wetlands. Over the last ten years, Dow has contributed approximately \$200,000 to support Conservation Education Programs at the wetland.

Municipal World

Municipal World is the oldest continuously published monthly municipal magazine in the world. Founded in 1891, the magazine is devoted to promoting effective municipal government. Over the years the importance of conservation has increasingly been highlighted through a wide variety of articles on energy conservation, urban natural areas and wetlands to mention a few. In addition to articles, Municipal World published a book called *Stepping up to the Climate Change Challenge*, edited by Susan Gardner and David Noble. Susan Gardner, Municipal World's Executive Editor, was a guest speaker at our 2009 Conservation Authority Annual Meeting. Her remarks clearly showed the Magazine's commitment to building sustainable communities throughout Canada and the world.

RBC Blue Water Project

The RBC Blue Water Project is an innovative, 10-year, global commitment to help protect the world's most precious natural resource: fresh water. Under the RBC Blue Water Project, RBC has committed :

To provide \$50 million in charitable grants to not-for-profit organizations that protect watersheds and provide or ensure access to clean drinking water. Since 2007, RBC has committed more than \$25 million in single and multi-year grants to 292 organizations.

To promote responsible and sustainable water use with their employees and clients through education and awareness programs that create an understanding of the value and vulnerability of our water resources; and to reduce the intensity of their own water footprint;

To encourage the growth of North American businesses that develop and commercialize innovative solutions to the water issues facing the world and increase their ability to provide financial services to these companies;

To take a leadership role to encourage the involvement of other corporations and encourage a spirit of collaboration among and between all sectors to help protect the world's fresh water.

Through the RBC Blue Water Project, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has benefitted from two \$5,000 donations. The first supported the Strathroy Water Trail and the second supported education programs related to Species at Risk. Both of these grants provide a significant contribution to our ability to provide conservation programs to the region.

Outstanding Farmer of the Year

Kevin Marriott was awarded the Outstanding Farmer of the Year by the Lambton Soil and Crop Improvement Association and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. Mr. Marriott won the award based on his achievement of combining a successful, sustainable farming operation with active community service. Mr. Marriott holds several positions including Deputy Mayor with the Township of Enniskillin and a member of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority.



Steve Arnold, Vice Chair of the SCRCA (left) and Dave Park from Parkland Farms (right) presents Kevin Marriott with the Outstanding Farmer of the Year award for 2010.



Conservation Foundation

The St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation is the fundraising arm of the Conservation Authority. The Foundation supports the programs of the Authority through a number of programs and through actively seeking the donation of conservation lands.

Foundation Board of Directors

Duncan Skinner, President
Lyn Goddard, Vice President
Melvin Dale/Norm Giffen, Treasurer
John Mitchell
John Simmons
Cathy Evers

Rex Crawford
William Bilton
Laura Margetts
Ken Brooks
Ottavio Colosimo
Andy Bruziewicz

Long Time Authority and Foundation Member Retires after 27 Years of Service

Melvin Dale announced his retirement from the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation this year. Melvin joined the Foundation in 1983 at the same time he was appointed to the Conservation Authority Board of Directors. While he left the Conservation Authority in 1992, Melvin continued his dedication for conservation by serving on the Foundation. Melvin served as Treasurer from 1992 until his retirement in 2010. Melvin's input on investments and local issues will be missed.



Melvin Dale helped launch the Ronn E. Dodge Memorial Forest in 1988. Melvin retired after 27 years of dedicated service.

Living Memorials

The St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation launched the memorial forest program in 1988 with the purpose of raising funds to reforest lands within our region. To date, 11,200 trees have been dedicated covering 36 different sites. Through the program, the Foundation arranges for the dedication of trees which have been planted from donations received directly from members of the community. In addition to these trees, the Foundation receives donations from the McKenzie and Blundy Funeral Home, Sarnia, Eric F. Nicholls Funeral Home, Wallaceburg and the Denning Brothers Funeral Home, Strathroy and has established separate memorial forests to recognize this contribution to the environment.

Through the Foundation, trees can be dedicated at any of the Authority's Conservation Areas. In 2010, 501 trees were dedicated and more than 1,000 people attended dedication ceremonies held at the various conservation forests.

Bingo Supports Conservation

Thanks to the many Foundation volunteers who assisted with our bingo program in Sarnia, the Foundation was able to support several conservation programs in 2010. A total of \$11,000 was provided to support conservation education, trails, visitor services and tree planting throughout Lambton County.

President's Award

The President's Award is presented to individuals or organizations which, through their generous spirit, support the work of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority through donations of cash, land or their talent as a volunteer.

Over the last several years, Gary Ingram, Dr. Pran Mehta, Murray Kemp, and John Williams have been working on a significant contribution to conservation through establishing a trust agreement and stewardship fund to support the donation of the Glenview Conservation Lands - a large property to the south of the Glenview subdivision in Petrolia.

These gentlemen have entered into an irrevocable trust agreement which will ensure a lasting legacy for these communities. In addition to the trust agreement, they have established a trust fund to help cover the costs of transferring and managing the lands in perpetuity by the Conservation Authority.



Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

Much of the work of Conservation Authorities impacts and is impacted by climate change. Locally, it is reported climate change will result in more severe weather causing more frequent and severe flooding and more frequent droughts. This will clearly have an impact on our flood damage reduction program and our low water response program. Much of our Healthy Watershed Program helps to mitigate these impacts. By planting trees, creating wetlands, protecting stream banks and creating natural spaces, we are increasing the resiliency of the watershed to withstand these impacts.

In response to this need, the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation has launched a campaign to raise funds for reducing our carbon footprint. This program uses the concept of "carbon offsets" to help individuals and companies understand how they can help. In simple terms, an individual or company can calculate how much carbon they produce, or how much carbon is produced by a particular activity. By undertaking projects that reduce the amount of carbon produced or by supporting programs such as tree planting, that absorbs carbon, your carbon footprint is reduced. Individuals or groups can choose to donate funds to support planting trees, protecting forests or creating wetlands to reduce their carbon footprint.

RBC Donates to Water Trail

RBC, through the Blue Water Project, donated \$5,000 to expand the work being done on the Strathroy Water Trail. The funds were used to improve the access points along the trail and to provide interpretive signs. This is a joint project between the Conservation Authority, Progress Through Partnerships and the Township of Strathroy-Caradoc.



The Strathroy River Trail is officially opened by (from left to right) Kevan Baker and Norm Giffen, SCRCA Strathroy-Caradoc Mayor Joanne Vanderheyden, and Justin Pasichnyk, Strathroy Branch Manager, RBC

Local Industry Supports Conservation Education

The Foundation continued its efforts in 2010 to seek corporate support for Conservation Education. We wish to sincerely thank the following organizations for their support of conservation education this year:

Sarnia Lambton Environmental Association: The Sarnia Lambton Environmental Association donated \$30,000 to support two in-class education programs dealing with the use of benthic invertebrates to measure river quality and the importance of our groundwater resources.

Dow Chemical Inc.: Dow Chemical donated \$25,000 to support the education program at the Dow Wetlands in St. Clair Township. The program is targeted at grades 4 - 8 as well as other groups including Girl Guides, Cubs and Young Naturalists.

Sansin Supports Tree Planting in Strathroy

With the help of funds donated by Sansin, a local company that has pioneered the use of environmentally-friendly water-borne wood protection technologies, trees and shrubs were purchased to support reforestation projects in the community of Strathroy - Caradoc.



Representatives of the Sansin Corporation along with the late Mayor, Mel Veale kick off the Strathroy Tree Planting and Clean Up day. Over 200 students took part in picking up garbage and planting more than 120 large trees.



Foundation Properties

The Foundation accepts land donations that further the objectives of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority by preserving important natural areas. To date, the Foundation has received 13 land donations totalling 306 hectares.

Bates Conservation Lands: Bates Conservation Lands, located along Rondeau Bay, was donated to the Foundation in 2002. Miss Bates generously donated 29 hectares of land bordering Rondeau Bay and Lake Erie. Approximately 17 hectares is a wetland known locally as Bates Marsh. The remaining lands include the homestead and forested land bordering the marsh and Lake Erie. According to Miss Bates' wishes, the lands are to be preserved for wildlife. The property qualified as an Eco-gift through Environment Canada.

Clark Wright Conservation Area: Mr. Clark Wright, a prominent resident of Strathroy, Ontario, was the founding president of the Foundation. Mr. Wright donated 20 hectares in Strathroy-Caradoc to the Foundation in 1986. In 1991, the Foundation officially opened the Clark Wright Conservation Forest. This is the Foundation's fourth Conservation Forest, established in memory of Mr. Clark Wright who passed away on December 5, 1990.

Cochrane Property: In 1989, Robert Cochrane donated 1.5 hectares of land in Enniskillen Township to the Foundation. The property was previously planted to trees and is a demonstration site for reforestation on hillsides.

Evoy Woodlot: This 36-hectare woodlot was donated through an irrevocable trust agreement registered on title. It was donated by Lance and Dale Evoy and their families. Their father, Tom Evoy, served on the Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 16 years and on the Foundation for 16 years.

Fraser Property: The Fraser property was donated to the Foundation by Mr. Bert Fraser in 1988. The one hectare of floodplain is now a part of the Esli G. Dodge Conservation Area in the community of Forest.

Gawne Property: Upon Mrs. Gawne's passing in April of 1997, her 40-hectare farm in the Township of Dawn-Euphemia was donated to the Foundation. In 2004, the Foundation purchased the life lease from Mrs. Gawne's son. Arrangements have been made with a neighbour to exchange approximately 1.8 hectares (the lot containing the buildings) for an equivalent area of forest land. In this way, the Foundation increases its holdings of forest while decreasing its liability of holding land with structures.

Harrison Woodlot: This 8-hectare woodlot in Middlesex Centre was generously donated in 2002 to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation by Lyle and Catharine Harrison in memory of Wayne Harrison. The woodlot is located on Sinclair Drive in Middlesex Centre. This property was donated by the Harrisons to preserve the woodlot for the benefit of future generations. A stream crossing was installed in 2004 to provide access to the woodlot by visitors. This access was funded through the Middlesex Stewardship Committee.

Huff Property: Norman and Douglas Huff donated a 12-hectare woodlot in The Municipality of Chatham-Kent to the Foundation in 1999. The property is being managed for timber and will also be used for passive recreation such as hiking and bird watching. The property qualified as an Eco-gift through Environment Canada.

Maple Woodlot: The Huron District Investment Company donated 3.2-hectares of woodlot to the Foundation in the centre of the Maples Subdivision in Plympton-Wyoming. The woodlot will provide a beautiful green space for this new community.

Murray Property: A one-hectare property in the community of Forest was generously donated in 1997 to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation by Mrs. Barbara Murray. The property abuts the Esli G. Dodge Conservation Area and provides additional access to the Conservation Area from Highway 21.

Reid Property: This 69-hectare property in St. Clair Township was donated by Lena Reid and Jean Lye. The property includes a beautiful 46-hectare forest which contains many significant Carolinian tree species such as giant shell bark hickory, chinquapin oak and blue ash. The property qualified as an Eco-gift through Environment Canada.

Sinclair Property: In 1989, the Foundation received a land donation from the late Dr. Douglas Sinclair and Naomi Sinclair. The 80-hectare property in the Township of Dawn-Euphemia includes a tallgrass prairie nursery operated by the Rural Lambton Stewardship Network and a 35-hectare forest.

Western Land Company Property: The Western Land Company donated six hectares of ravine land in the community of Strathroy to the Foundation. The lands join with the 40-hectare Strathroy Conservation Area and have allowed the trails in the Conservation Area to be extended along a beautiful ravine.



Finance and Administration

Administration Office

The Conservation Authority had a successful year in program development and financial management. On an ongoing basis, Authority staff work to find funds to undertake the proposed projects and to take advantage of funding opportunities that arise over the year. Efforts to find alternative sources of funds have helped the SCRCA maintain one of the lowest municipal levy levels in the province at only \$3.19 for a home assessed at \$100,000.

Administration Highlights

- The SCRCA continues to administer the contract for the Sarnia Bay Marina on behalf of the City of Sarnia and Bridgeview Marina. This involves regular reports to the City of Sarnia based on review of finances and operation of the facility.
- In order to support our conservation partners, the Authority provides bookkeeping services for our three Stewardship Councils: Rural Lambton Stewardship Council, Middlesex Stewardship, Stewardship Kent as well as the Rondeau Bay Watershed Coalition.

Employment Programs

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority actively seeks opportunities to provide employment for local youth and those who are seeking to gain valuable work experience. In 2010, the SCRCA was successful in obtaining grants to hire 27 people which assisted in a variety of conservation programs.

Job Creation Partnership: contribution agreement for \$179,000 with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to provide employment training for 9 people for 34 to 51 weeks

Career Focus: \$40,000 grant was provided by Service Canada to employ a biologist and a GIS Technician for a 36 week period

Summer Job Service: \$10,000 provincial grant to provide a wage subsidy for 14 summer students

Summer Experience: \$5,700 grant to employ 2 students

- Muriel Andreae, Senior Biologist
- Kevan Baker, Director of Conservation Areas
- Rick Battson, Director of Communications
- Diane Brodie, Payroll and Accounting Clerk
- Erin Carroll, Aquatic Systems Technician
- Ralph Coe, General Manager
- William Dakin, Director of Financial Services
- Marlene Dorrestyn, Administrative Assistant
- Chris Durand, GIS/IT Specialist
- Patricia Hayman, Director of Planning and Research
- Claude Lafrance, St. Clair River AOC Coordinator
- Jeff Lawrence, Environmental Planner/Regulations Officer
- Brian McDougall, Director of Watershed Services
- Tim Payne, Forest Management Technician
- Girish Sankar, Water Resources Engineering Technician
- Alison Siedler, GIS/Resources Technician
- Steve Shaw, Conservation Services Specialist

Drinking Water Source Protection

- John Campbell, Source Water Protection Database Specialist
- Stephen Clark, Data Technician
- Deb Kirk, Administrative Assistant
- Derekica Snake, First Nations Liaison
- Ingrid Vanderschot, Source Protection Policy Advisor

Field Offices

McKeough Floodway

Shane White, Maintenance Foreman

A.W. Campbell Conservation Area

Mike Tizzard, Superintendent
Don Skinner, Assistant Superintendent

Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area

Terry Barrie, Superintendent
Mark Bakelaar, Assistant Superintendent
Sharon Nethercott, Conservation Education Coordinator
Kimberly Gledhill, Conservation Education/Community Partnership Technician

Warwick Conservation Area

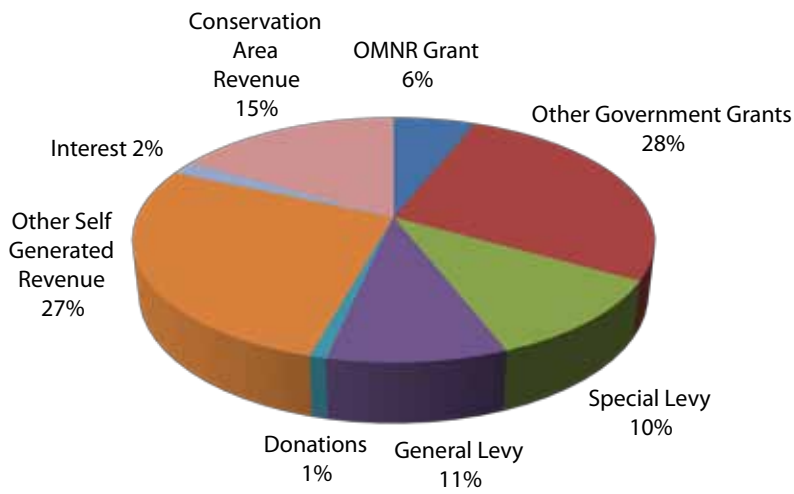
Bill Turner, Superintendent
Glen Baxter, Assistant Superintendent

The SCRCA employs an additional 30 - 40 seasonal staff throughout the year.

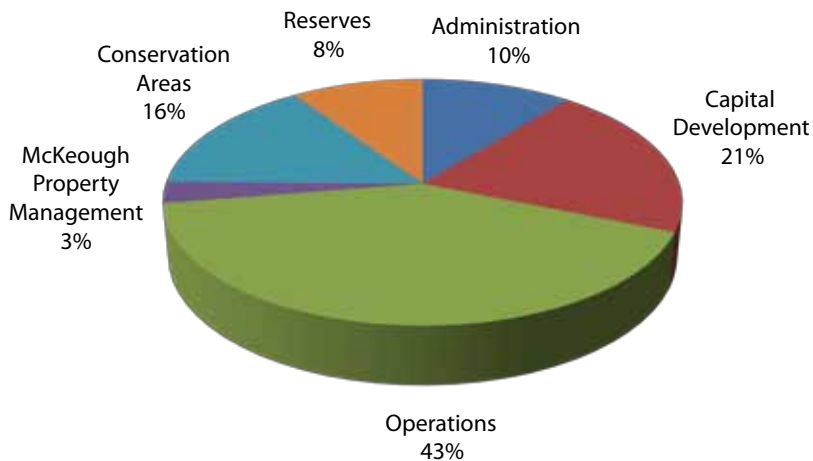


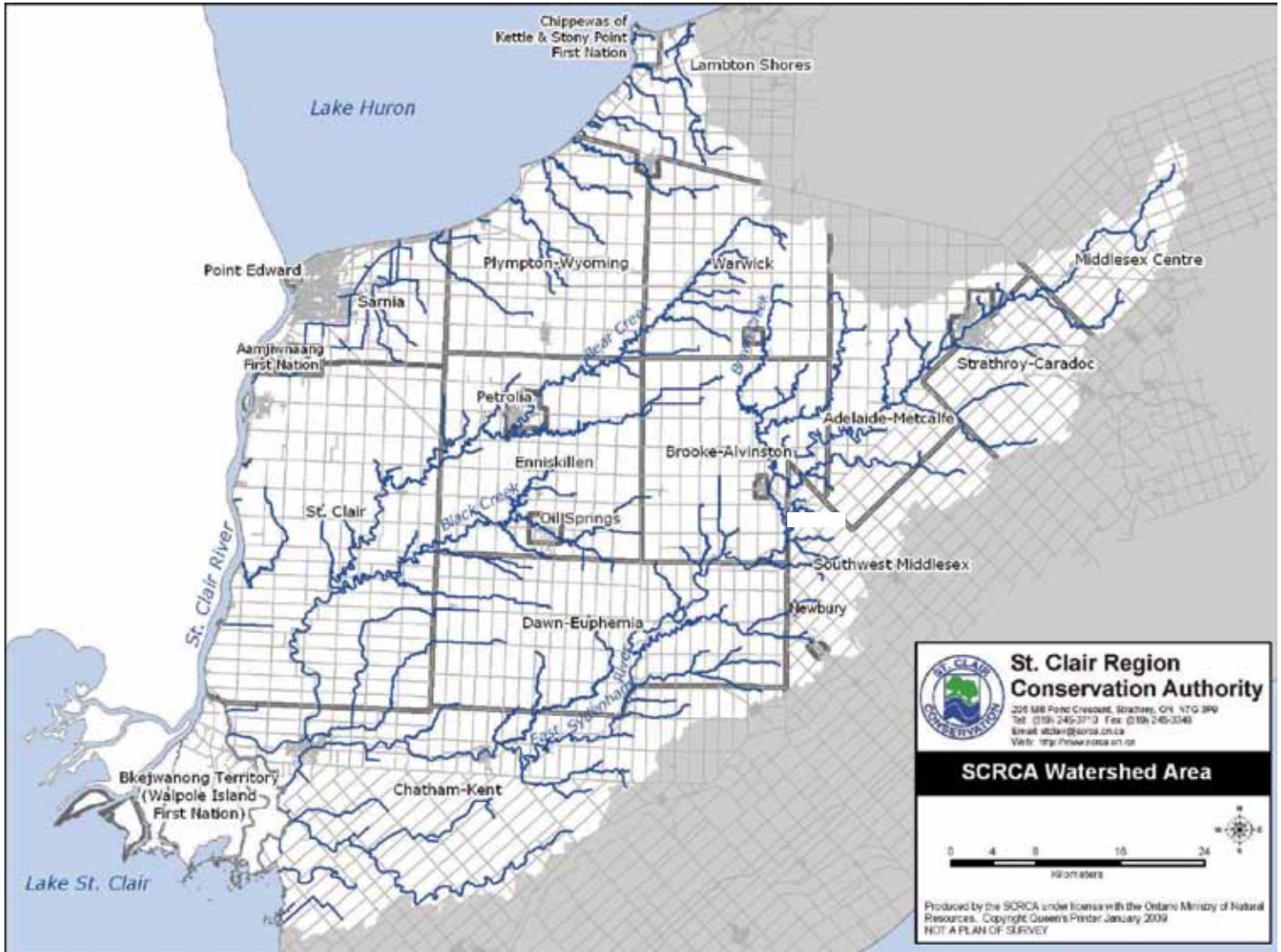
Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue - \$5,029,246



Expenditures - \$5,029,246





Facts and Figures

Watershed Area - 4,100 km²
 Population - 159,666
 Drainage area of the Sydenham River - 2,724 km²

East Branch of the Sydenham River
 total length - 165 kilometres
 total fall - 106 metres

North Branch of the Sydenham River
 total length - 137 kilometres
 total fall - 77 metres

Land owned by Conservation Authority - 1,682 ha
 Land owned by Conservation Foundation - 306 ha
 Land managed by Conservation Authority (not owned) - 543 ha
 Flood Easements - 648 ha

Special thanks to Sharon Nethercott for the use of her personal nature photos throughout this report.

**St. Clair Region
Conservation Authority**
205 Mill Pond Cr.
Strathroy, ON, N7G 3P9
519 245-3710, 519 245-3348 FAX
E-Mail: stclair@scrca.on.ca



member of
**Conservation
Ontario**

www.scrca.on.ca