



Conservation Ontario E-News

Representing Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities



March 2011

This newsletter provides information and updates on issues about Ontario's Conservation Authorities.

How do Conservation Authorities Protect Water?

Monitor watershed conditions and develop integrated watershed management plans in order to maintain, restore or protect our natural resources for the long term

Help to protect lives and property from flooding and erosion by ensuring that our flood and erosion plans are up to date and in line with current predicted standards

Deliver Watershed Stewardship programs that work with landowners and other partners protect the quality and supply of our water

Map our surface & groundwater in order to know how much we have, how it's being used and what is needed to keep the watershed healthy

Monitor water levels within Ontario's watersheds and raise

Celebrating Water

The theme of the United Nations 2011 World Water Day is ***Water for Cities***. This theme focuses on the impact of rapid urban population growth, industrialization and uncertainties caused by climate change, conflicts and natural disasters on urban water systems.

Water is needed in all aspects of our lives.

Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities work closely with government, residents and other agencies to build the resilience of our natural environment in order to protect important sources of drinking water such as lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater against the impacts of challenges such as urbanization and climate change.

Conservation Authorities monitor our environment and deliver practical solutions to ensure there is enough clean water resources for all our needs.

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MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT WATER IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Integrated Watershed Management

We do not have an unlimited supply of WATER in Ontario. The water we have now is all that we will have. Overusing our water resources means less water for all.

To protect our valuable water resources, Conservation Authorities promote an **Integrated Watershed Management** (IWM) approach that takes into consideration user needs as well as what impacts our water. IWM provides a way for all water users to learn about their water and help ensure sustainable future water sources.

alerts around low water levels through the local Low Water Response teams along with municipal and provincial partners

Carry out research to increase our knowledge about water and develop new approaches to protecting water

Provide education and outreach opportunities for Ontarians to learn about water.



Important Relationships between our Environment, Economy and People

The environment provides many important economic and social benefits that are not just luxuries, but critical to our well being.

Forests, wetlands, plants, animals, birds and fish provide important services such as:

- controlling flooding and erosion
- cleaning water sources
- managing drought
- pollinating crops
- recharging our water sources
- providing valuable green space
- storing carbon emissions

Economically, our environment helps to produce energy, supplies water to industry and individual households, contributes to tourism, timber, fisheries and recreation industries, provides food and much, much more.

Integrated Watershed Management is managing human activities and natural resources, including both land and water - on a watershed basis - in order to ensure a sustainable, healthy environment that can support a vibrant economy and healthy population.



A key aspect of using an IWM approach to managing the impacts of our actions on the environment is to make sure that all water users are sharing responsibility for making decisions.

STUDY LOOKS AT HOW WE USE INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT IN ONTARIO TODAY

In partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation Ontario recently released a series of reports, which assess how IWM is applied in the province today and what shifts are needed in order to improve and expand on its use.

In addition to a **Summary Report**, a series of three reports were developed:

[Integrated Watershed Management in Ontario](#) Phase I: Status of IWM

- Phase II: Defining IWM in Ontario
- Phase III: Updating IWM in Ontario

A Water Management Framework for Ontario

A Water Budget Overview for Ontario

To **DOWNLOAD** or review these reports, visit **[Conservation Ontario's website](#)**.



WATER EDUCATION IS FOR EVERYONE

Wetlands: The Workhorses of Our Watersheds is an interactive DVD that shows how Ontario's wetlands protect Great Lakes. It explores the benefits that wetlands provide; show how wetlands contribute to Ontario's economy; the threats to wetlands today and what you can do to help.

Water Connections is an animated DVD that introduces watersheds and how they work, teaches you about the different features of our watersheds, shows how you can be a steward and provides information on the Conservation Authorities' role in integrated watershed management, including Source Protection.

The Ripple Effect is a captivating 15 minute DVD on the role of Conservation Authorities in protecting Ontario's water sources.

Groundwater - Ours to Protect is an informative DVD about the conservation of groundwater.

VISIT Conservation Ontario's website to explore these tools and order your own copy.



HOW YOU CAN LEARN ABOUT THE WATER IN YOUR WATERSHED

All Conservation Authorities help to protect municipal drinking water sources by participating in the **Ontario Drinking Water Source Protection Program**. To see what's being done in your watershed, visit [Conservation Ontario's website](#).

Rideau Valley Conservation is hosting a [Series of Backgrounders on Water](#) to celebrate World Water Day 2011.

Learn About Water in the Greater Toronto Area. In just three years, per capita consumption of water in the Greater Toronto Area has decreased by 9%! Learn more about the state of the GTA's water, carbon emissions, biodiversity, waste, land use and air quality in the [Living City Report Card](#). Released in 2011, this report card was produced by [Toronto and Region Conservation and Greening Greater Toronto](#).

The Grand River Water Management Plan shares responsibility for protecting water. The Grand River flows through the heart of one of the richest, most diverse regions in Canada. Historically, the economic vitality of the Grand River watershed has been based on the areas's abundant natural resources. Population growth, intensive agriculture and climate change are all placing stress on the natural system with implications for the continued health and prosperity of our communities. A new plan to address existing and emerging issues is being developed by a broad group of agencies and organizations responsible for water issues in the Grand River watershed, including the [Grand River Conservation Authority](#). [READ MORE](#).

This bulletin is produced by:
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