



GRCA Rural & Agricultural Guide to Permits

Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shoreline
and Watercourses, Ontario Regulation 168/06

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Introduction

Conservation Authorities help ensure the conservation, restoration and responsible management of water, land and natural habitats.

The purpose of this guide is to help rural and agricultural landowners identify permission requirements under the Ontario Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses (Ontario Regulation 168/06) as administered by Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA).

This guide summarizes GRCA's existing Rural and Agricultural Guide to Permits, Technical Support Document. For specific details please refer to the approved Policy and Procedural Document or contact GRCA for further clarity on specific policy requirement, background information, definitions, detailed information regarding technical standards and guidelines, and other supporting information.

Why obtain a permit?

Certain activities within regulated areas require permission from GRCA pursuant to the Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990. The permitting process helps ensure you are making a sound investment and/or undertaking activities that are not at risk associated with flooding, erosion, and other natural hazards that could impact your investments, in addition to minimizing impacts to important natural features, such as watercourses and wetlands. A successful project starts with good planning, and the permitting process gives you access to knowledgeable, qualified professionals who can assist with your plans.

When reviewing your permit application, we help ensure it meets the following objectives:

- Minimize public and private costs for emergency operations, evacuations, disaster relief, and restoration,
- Ensure the development does not increase flood risks to upstream and downstream landowners,
- Prevent the filling in and/or draining of areas that naturally store and discharge water, or cause an increase in flood elevations, and/or decrease the stability of slopes,
- Protect wetlands and watercourses and their functions,
- Prevent pollution and other degradation of rivers and other water bodies,
- Minimize the risk to loss of life and property damage as a result of flooding,
- Direct development away from natural hazard prone land (e.g. flooding, erosion),
- Determine whether or not in the opinion of the Authority, the development proposal will affect the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches, pollution, or the conservation of land.

How do I know if a permit is required?

Development occurring within river or stream valleys, hazardous lands, wetlands and their areas of interference, and/or an activity that would interfere with a wetland and/or watercourse requires written permission from GRCA before activities can proceed. The following will help to identify whether or not a permit is required for your proposed activity.

Identifying if your proposed activity is in a regulated area

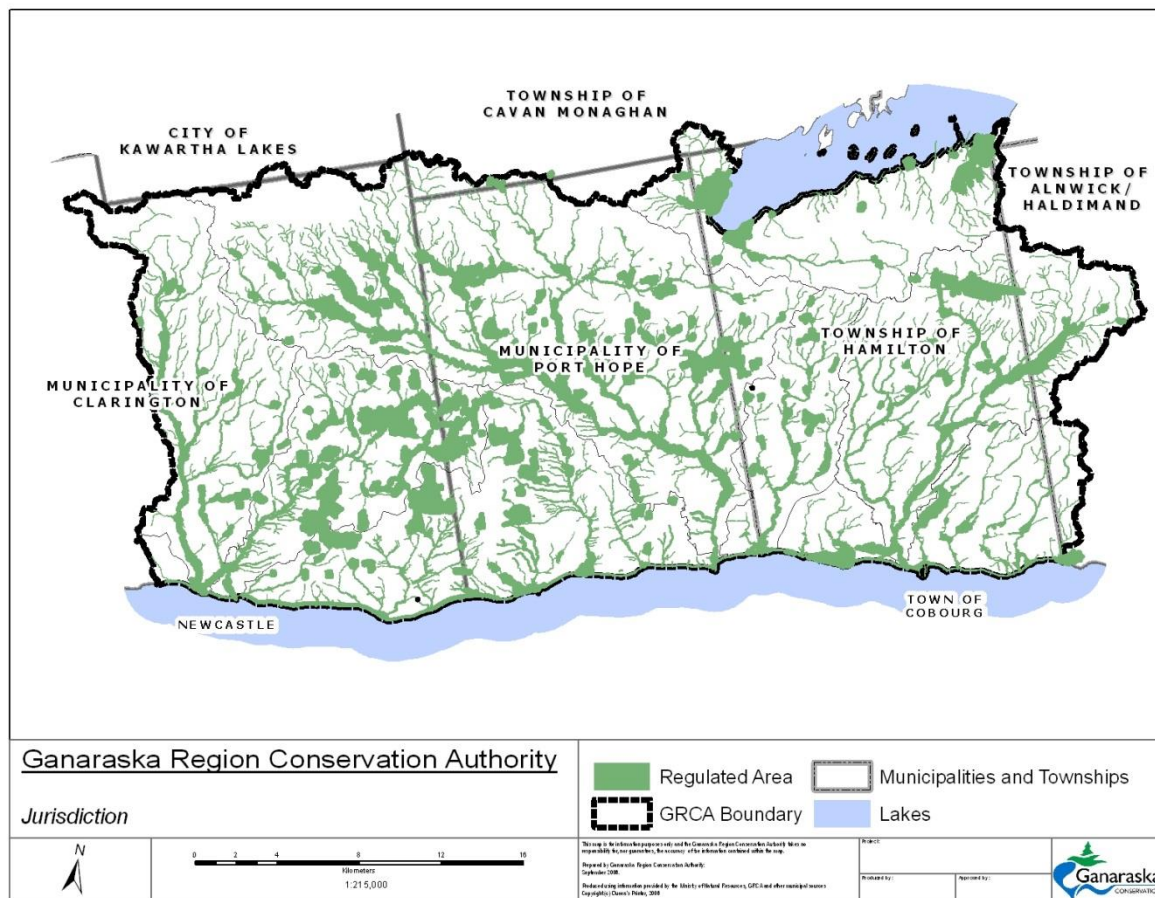


Figure 1 – Map of the Ganaraska Region Watershed

Regulated areas include:

- River or stream valleys plus 15m allowance
- Watercourses
- Hazardous lands
- Wetlands
- Lands within 30 metres or 120 metres of a wetland
- Flooding and erosion hazards associated shorelines plus 15m allowance

To view mapping of Regulation Limits, please contact the GRCA or visit www.camaps.ca. Note that the Regulation Limit mapping is only an approximation of the regulated feature, and is based on the best available information. If your development activity involves a regulated feature not shown by the mapping, a permit may still be required.

Note: Lands outside of the watershed would be subject to the policy and procedural requirements of other Conservation Authorities.

Identifying if the type of development activity is regulated

All development, as defined in the *Conservation Authorities Act* within a regulated area requires a permit. This includes the following:

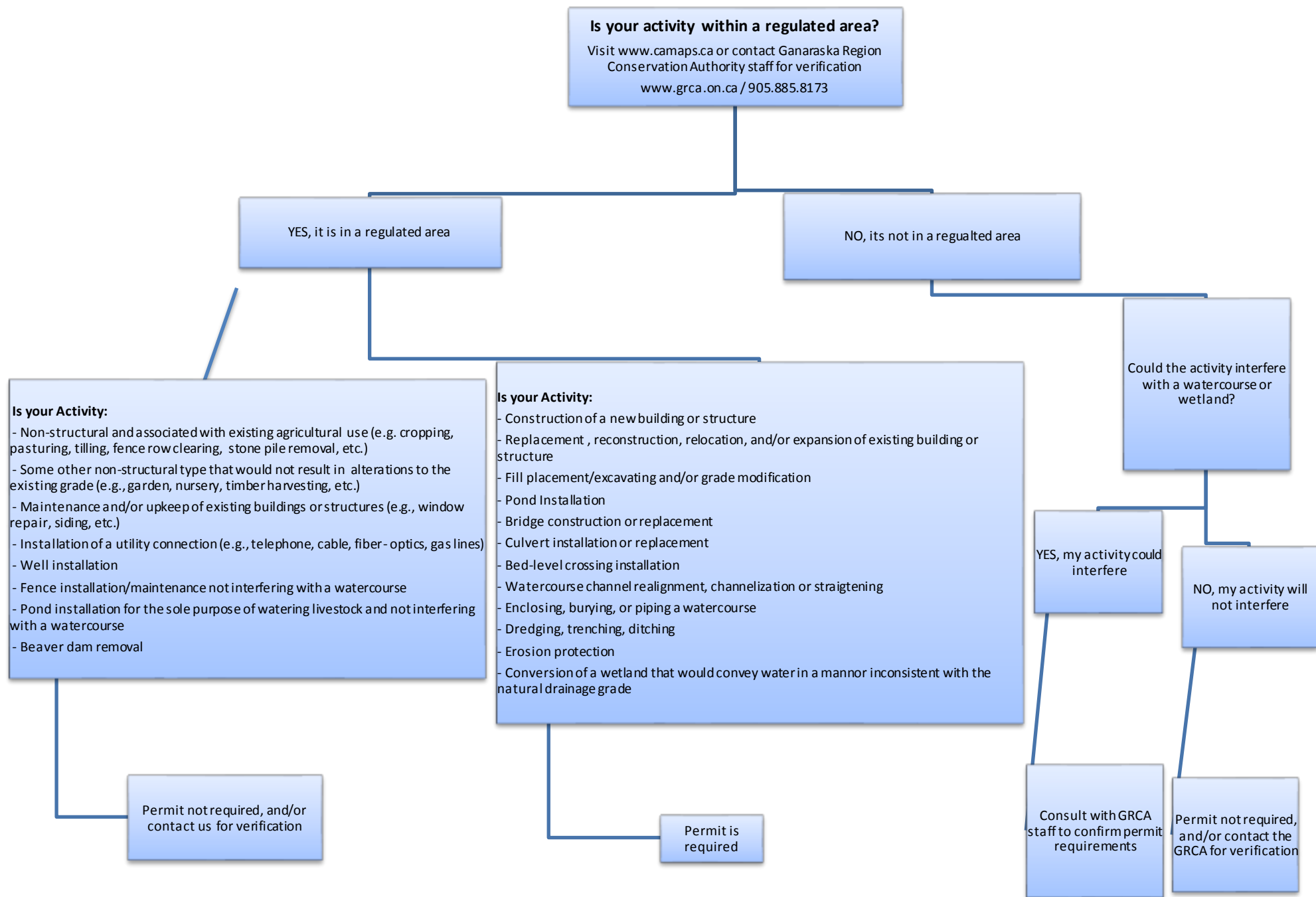
- Construction of a new building or structure
- Replacement, reconstruction, relocation and/or expansion of an existing building or structure
- Fill placement/excavation and/or grade modifications
- Pond installation
- Bridge construction or replacement
- Culvert installation or replacement
- Bed-level crossing installation
- Watercourse channel realignment, channelization, or straightening
- Enclosing, burying, or piping a watercourse
- Dredging, trenching, ditching
- Erosion protection
- Any activity that could interfere with a wetland or watercourse

The following activities in regulated areas generally do not require a permit unless they would interfere with a watercourse (i.e., drainage ditch, creek, lake) or wetland.

- Non-structural activities associated with existing agricultural use (e.g. cropping, pasturing, tilling, fence row clearing, stone pile removal, etc.)
- Other non-structural type that would not result in alterations to the existing grade (e.g., garden, nursery, timber harvesting, etc.)
- Maintenance and/or upkeep of existing buildings or structures (e.g., window repair, siding, etc.)
- Fence installation provided it does not encroach into a flood hazard
- Pond installation for the sole purpose of watering livestock and does not alter the watercourse

Note that for tile drainage outlets, written approval is not needed if they are installed in accordance with the following best management practices:

- Maintain sediment and erosion control measures during installation
- Minimize vegetation disturbance
- Carry out work during dry or low-water periods
- Set outlet back from the bank and does not alter the watercourse
- Incorporate permanent erosion protection



How do I obtain a permit?

If your activity requires a permit, an application will need to be completed and sent to the GRCA along with the corresponding fee. Applications are available, along with the current fee schedule, online at www.grca.on.ca. The application form and fee schedule can also be obtained by fax, mail, or by contacting GRCA at 905-885-8173.

Please note that in addition to a permit under Conservation Authority regulations, other permissions may be required from other federal, provincial, and municipal bodies. It is your responsibility to ensure that you obtain all of the necessary approvals that are relevant to your project.

The permit process

It is recommended that you consult with GRCA staff prior to making an application. Staff can help identify application requirements and advise applicants of approvals that may be required under other legislation.

From the date of confirmation of a complete application, our target decision timeframe for the application is:

- 30 days for a minor application
- 90 days for a major application

Major applications may include those that are highly complex, requiring a full technical review, and need to be supported by a comprehensive analysis; or, do not conform to Conservation Authorities Board-approved Policies for the Implementation of Ontario Regulation 168/06.

Site visits are typically conducted in order to confirm on-site or nearby features and application information. Site visits can also be used to determine and/or stake the limits of natural features, natural hazards or the physical top-of-bank.

Each application will be evaluated on the compliance to the policies in GRCA's Policies for the Implementation of Ontario Regulation 168/06.

For further technical information regarding the definition of regulation limits, please see Rural and Agricultural Guide to Permits, Technical Support Document.