



NOTICE OF MEETING

DATE: November 28, 2024

TIME: 4:00 pm

LOCATION: Hybrid Meeting

AGENDA

MEETING:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEMBERS:

Randy Barber, Bruce Buttar, Mark Lovshin, Vicki Mink, Miriam Mutton, Lance Nachoff, Adam Pearson, Tracy Richardson, Joan Stover, Willie Woo, Margaret Zwart

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Call to Order

Land Acknowledgement

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we gather is situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississauga's and Chippewa's of the Anishinabek, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. Our work on these lands acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contribution to the area. We are thankful for the opportunity to live, learn and share with mutual respect and appreciation.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest
3. Minutes of Last Meeting – **October 17, 2024 – attached**
4. Adoption of the Agenda

5. Delegations:
None.
6. Presentations:
 - a) Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) Annual Report - **staff report attached**
7. Business Arising from Minutes:
 - a) 2025 Municipal Levy – **staff report attached**
8. Correspondence:
None.
9. Applications under Ontario Regulation 41/24 and *Conservation Authorities Act*.
Permits approved by Executive - **schedule attached**

Permit applications requiring Board of Directors discussion:
None
10. Committee Reports:
 - a) Ganaraska Forest Recreation Users Committee Minutes – November 7, 2024 - **attached**
11. New Business:
 - a) Highway 401 Expansion over the Ganaraska River and Impacts to Conservation Areas – **staff report attached**
 - b) Ganaraska Forest Centre Gym Demolition and Proposed Rebuild – **staff report attached**
12. Other Business:
 - a) Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy – **staff report attached**
13. Public Question Period - **Agenda Items Only**
 - All questions are to be submitted the day before by 4:00 pm in advance of the Board of Directors meeting in order to allow staff to prepare the answers to the questions. The Chair has discretion for questions on the day of the meeting.
 - A maximum of 10 minutes will be allotted for the Question Period. More time can be allocated at the discretion of the Chair.
 - Persons wishing to ask a question must state their name and address for the record.
 - Questions will be restricted to only those items listed on the agenda.

- Questions cannot be asked on “In Camera” items.
- Questions cannot be asked with respect to minutes of Board of Directors meetings or committee meetings.
- All persons will speak respectfully when asking the question.
- The Chair may conclude the Question Period prior to the ten (10) minute time limit, where attendees are disobeying the Rules of Order, or a decision of the Chair, or where there are no questions.

14. In Camera:
None.

15. Adjourn

Please Note: **A Source Protection Authority meeting will follow the Board of Directors meeting.**

GANARASKA REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October 17, 2024 (Hybrid)

GRCA 06/24

1. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement and Call to Order

The Chair called the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) Board of Directors meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vicki Mink, Chair - Municipality of Port Hope
Willie Woo, Vice-Chair - Municipality of Clarington
Mark Lovshin, Chair - Township of Hamilton
Miriam Mutton - Town of Cobourg
Lance Nachoff - Township of Cavan Monaghan
Adam Pearson - Municipality of Port Hope
Tracy Richardson - City of Kawartha Lake
Joan Stover - Township of Alnwick/Haldimand
Margaret Zwart - Municipality of Clarington
Bruce Buttar - Agricultural Representative

ALSO PRESENT: Linda Laliberte, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
Cory Harris, Watershed Services Coordinator
Ken Thajer, Planning and Regulations Coordinator

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Randy Barber - Town of Cobourg

ALSO ABSENT:

Land Acknowledgement

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we gather is situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississauga's and Chippewa's of the Anishinabek, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. Our work on these lands acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contribution to the area. We are thankful for the opportunity to live, learn and share with mutual respect and appreciation.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting**GRCA 48/24****MOVED BY:** Adam Pearson**SECONDED BY:** Joan Stover

THAT the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority approve the minutes of the September 19, 2024 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of the Agenda**GRCA 49/24****MOVED BY:** Tracy Richardson**SECONDED BY:** Lance Nachoff

THAT the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority adopt the agenda.

CARRIED.

5. Business Arising from Minutes:

None.

6. Delegations

a) Cheque Presentation: Ten Thousand Villages

Bob LeDrew, Derrick Cunningham and board chair Barb Henderson presented a cheque to Ganaraska Conservation for the purchase of trees to be planted in honor of Ten Thousand Villages 15th anniversary.

GRCA 50/24**MOVED BY:** Adam Pearson**SECONDED BY:** Joan Stover

THAT the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority receive the staff report for information and thank Ten Thousand Villages for their donation.

CARRIED.

7. Presentations

None.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Applications under Ontario Regulation 41/24 and *Conservation Authorities Act*:

Permits approved by Executive:

GRCA 51/24**MOVED BY:** Willie Woo**SECONDED BY:** Bruce Buttar

THAT the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority receive the permits for information.
CARRIED.

Permit Application requiring Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors discussion:
None.

10. Committee Reports:

None.

11. New Business:

a) 2025 Preliminary Budget and Municipal Levy

The CAO/Secretary-Treasurer presented the 2025 Preliminary Budget and Municipal Levy staff report. Joan Stover asked for an update with regards to the Town of Cobourg storm water charges. The CAO/Secretary-Treasurer reported that the charges had been significantly reduced and the conservation authority would continue to seek an exemption.

GRCA 52/24

MOVED BY: Adam Pearson

SECONDED BY: Lance Nachoff

THAT the Board of Directors receive the 2025 Preliminary Budget for information and;

FURTHER THAT the budget be forwarded to the watershed municipalities, indicating in the cover letter, that the vote to approve the 2025 levy will be taken at the November 28, 2024 Board of Directors meeting.

CARRIED.

12. Other Business

None.

13. Public Question Period

None.

14. In Camera

None.

15. Adjourn

GRCA 53/24

MOVED BY: Adam Pearson

THAT the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

CARRIED.

CHAIR



CAO/SECRETARY-TREASURER

STAFF REPORT – November 28, 2024

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

RE: Ganaraska Forest Recreation Users Committee (RUC) Annual Report

As part of the Terms of Reference of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) under the heading Reporting Function, it is stated that the RUC Chair or designate, other than staff, shall report to the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) Board on its activities, over the previous year, by the end of the year. Bob Gallagher, Chair of the RUC, will be presenting the attached report to Board of Directors.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the GRCA Board of Directors receive the presentation for information.

Recommended by:



**Linda J. Laliberte, CPA, CGA
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer**

Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee

Report from the Chair

Prepared by Bob Gallagher

20 November 2024

INTRODUCTION

I was appointed chair of the Recreation Users Committee mid-year. Therefore, I am reporting having attended the last two meetings of the year, and having reviewed the minutes of the previous two meetings.

It has been a pleasure taking on this role, getting to know the members, learning the committee process and watching the committee and staff come together to improve and support the public's recreational use of the forest. I have been impressed with the seriousness with which the members have taken their responsibilities, and appreciate the support provided by Pam and Ed.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

In all four meetings there was good attendance from members. Things I have tried to encourage by my role as chair have been: increasing participation during the meetings, increasing the issues that get discussed, and setting a tone that encourages members to bring their issues and ideas into the committee meetings.

The feedback I have received from members and staff is that the level of engagement and the enthusiasm of members has increased. Members has started asking to give deputations on issues and have started placing items on the agenda to be discussed.

One such item related to this is the idea of adding additional representatives to the committee. While there was not a formal recommendation to the Board, there was a good discussion about additions of local groups and expanded seats at the table. There was no suggestion of replacing current organizations, but the possibility of adding to the current make-up. This discussion was very productive in thinking through the role of the RUC as an advisory board.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

I was very fortunate that in my first meeting to have on the agenda an item to go around and have everyone describe what their users like about the forest and how they use the forest. This was very instructive for me, and I think very useful for the members.

From that discussion, it was clear that each of the members and those they represent, love the forest and are very grateful for the ability to use the forest in their many ways. It also became clear to me that there is much less antagonism between the various types of users than I anticipated. There were far more comments about how others work well with them, than there was references to problems and conflicts between types of users. In talking to the

members outside of the meetings, I get the distinct sense there is a real appreciation for the multi-user philosophy of the Ganaraska forest.

The one recurring area of concern that has come up a number of times in the meetings is the issue of trails – their maintenance, their openness and their signage. These are related but separate issues with concerns expressed by different members. But from my observation, this related series of concerns has a number of members quite animated and believe the issues have been going on for a while without satisfactory resolutions. Many point to an inability to recover completely to the pre-storm state of the trails.

My sense is that these issues can be resolved by work on the committee's part in collaboration with the staff. But without focus and deliberate action they could fester. Therefore, I recommend we facilitate a working group of RUC to consider these issues in a more focused way than the committee can do in its four-times-a-year format. I believe the staff and all of the members are persons of good will, willing to compromise and capable of creative solutions.

I believe that with progress on this set of issues, we can create an even better sense of trust and respect in the committee that will spread out to the many users of our great forest.

RUC VISABILITY AND AWARENESS

I used the forest during the 1990s and early 2000s as a hiker, skier and equestrian mainly in the Central forest. For the last three years. I have ridden my horse on an almost daily basis primarily in the East forest. During this time, I have gotten to know many people who use the forest. I am struck by four things that I hear almost universally: 1) they LOVE the forest and believe it is a blessing to them to have access to it; 2) they love the multi-user feature of the forest; 3) they have no idea about the recreational users committee or what it does; and 4) they don't think the trails are as well-kept as they use to be. During my time, I have been struck by the lack of people complaining about other people's uses. I am also struck by how few people currently use the forest (even on weekends).

These observations lead me to believe RUC's work is very useful, but we need to figure out how we can extend our reach and visibility to more users – and hopefully encourage more users. That will be a good goal for the committee to have in the upcoming year.

I want to thank the Board for the opportunity to chair this committee. It is a pleasure.

Sincerely,
Bob Gallagher
Recreational Users Committee, Chair

Email: bob@bobgallagher.ca
Phone: 416-434-2221

Staff Report – November 28, 2024

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

Re: 2025 Municipal Levy Vote

The proposed 2025 preliminary budget and levy were forwarded to all municipalities on October 18, 2024. The package included a letter, which indicated that the decision on the 2025 levy would be made at the November 28, 2024 board meeting. The budget criteria approved at the September meeting included an increase to the base levy of 3.0% to \$16,953.59 and the overall levy was increased by 3.0%. An allowance was also built in for a 3.0% increase in the salary grid to be effective January 1, 2025. All increases in levies are adjusted by the increase or decrease in the appointment from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forest which will result in further increases or decreased to the municipalities. These amounts were outlined in the October 18, 2024 letters to the municipalities.

At the November 28, 2024 Board of Directors' meeting, the members will be asked to vote on the 2025 levy in the amount of \$1,318,251. This will be a recorded vote and done by weighted average. Where there are two representatives from a municipality, the weight assigned to that municipality is distributed to each representative equally and is not redistributed should a representative not be in attendance at the meeting. Please note the weights assigned to each municipality are as listed below. The apportionment percentages are set by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs as part of the current value assessment.

It should be noted that Ontario Regulation 402/22 Budget and Apportionment Levies under the *Conservation Authorities Act* states:

19(5) Municipality shall not have a weighted vote of more than 50 per cent of the total weighted value for all of the votes to be cast unless the municipality appoints more than 50 per cent of the members to the authority.

Therefore, the appointment for the Municipality of Clarington will be capped at 50% and the remaining 1.8988% is redistributed among the other six municipalities by the appointment assigned.

Members must be present to vote; a proxy vote is not allowed. The resolution must receive 51% of the vote present to be carried.

	CVA Apportionment	Voting Apportionment
Municipality of Clarington	51.8988%	50.0000% (25.0% each)
Town of Cobourg	20.2926%	21.0937% (10.5468% each)
Municipality of Port Hope	16.2045%	16.8442% (8.4221% each)
Township of Alnwick/Haldimand	0.9452%	0.9825%
Township of Hamilton	10.3754%	10.785%
Township of Cavan Monaghan	0.1975%	0.2053%
City of Kawartha Lakes	0.0860%	0.0893%

Board members are encouraged to contact the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer to answer any questions as it relates to the apportionment in advance of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the GRCA Board of Directors approve the 2025 Municipal Levy Vote staff report that includes the 2025 levy in the amount of \$1,318,251 and a 3.0% increase in the salary grid effective January 1, 2025.

Prepared by:



Linda J. Laliberte, CPA, CGA
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

Conservation Authorities Act - Ontario Regulation 41/24

Permits approved by Executive:

Date: November 28, 2024

Permit No.	Date	Address	Municipality/ Township	Description of Works
2412-09/24	Sep.13/24	2216 County Road 28 (Millennium Trail CA) Pt.Lt.4, Conc.2	Port Hope	Relocation of an existing boardwalk.
2413-09/24	Sep.13/24	2216 County Road 28 (Millennium Trail CA) Pt.Lt.4, Conc.2	Port Hope	Reconstruction of an existing boardwalk in same location.
2414-11/24	Nov.05/24	5881 Ochonski Road Orono Pt.Lt.30, Conc.5	Clarington	Construction of a detached garage.
2418-10/24	Oct.23/24	5139 Halstead Beach Road Unit #420 – Bewdley Pt.Lt.26, Conc.8	Hamilton	Installation of a Holding Tank.
2421-10/24	Oct.31/24	668A, 668B, 964 and 704 North Street – Newcastle Pt.Lts.29 &30, Conc.2	Clarington	Cut & fill in the floodplain in support of a subdivision development.
2422-10/24	Oct.18/24	7 Pebble Beach Drive Cobourg Pt.Lt.23, Conc.A	Cobourg	Construction of a replacement deck.
2424-10/24	Oct.31/24	103 Third Street – Cobourg Cobourg Harbour	Cobourg	Dredging operations of Cobourg Harbour, resulting in removal of material, placed within and around the harbour.
2425-10/24	Oct.23/24	5766 Lakeshore Road – Port Hope Pt.Lt.12, Conc.1	Port Hope	Installation of an above-ground pool.
2427-11/24	Nov.5/24	5714 Rice Lake Scenic Drive – Gores Landing Pt.Lt.9, Conc.9	Hamilton	Placement of a mobile home, and installation of a septic system.

MINUTES OF THE GANARASKA FOREST

RECREATIONAL USERS COMMITTEE

November 7, 2024

RUC 4/24

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The Chair welcomed all present and introduced two new members of the Recreational Users Committee, Rick Trumper and Karen Graham. The Chair called the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee (RUC) meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

MEMBER PRESENT: Bob Gallagher, Chair
Jim Pearson, Ontario Trail Riders Association
Garry Niece, Hike Ontario
Rick Trumper, Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club
Lisa Thompson, Ontario Federation of Trail Riders
Alex Schmidt, Ontario Cycling Association
Carolyn Richards, Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs
Peter Wood, Ontario Federation of 4WD Recreationists
Steve Brownell, Municipality of Port Hope
Maureen McDonald, Township of Cavan Monaghan
Karen Graham, Municipality of Clarington
Lance Nachoff, GRCA Board of Directors

ALSO PRESENT: Ed Van Osch, GRCA Forest Recreation Technician
Pam Lancaster, GRCA Conservation Lands Coordinator

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Jennifer Jackman, Ontario Nature

ALSO ABSENT: Matthew Robbins, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
Amber Panchyshyn, Orienteering Ontario
Cross Country Ski Ontario (position unfilled)
City of Kawartha Lakes (position unfilled)

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RUC 16/24

MOVED BY: Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY: Peter Wood

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee approve the minutes of the September 5, 2024 meeting.

CARRIED.

4. Adoption of Agenda

RUC 17/24

MOVED BY:

Alex Schmidt

SECONDED BY:

Maureen McDonald

THAT the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED.

5. Delegations

On behalf of cycling community, Alex Schmidt presented the desire to include Peterborough Trail Builders and Pauls Dirty Enduro Trails into the GRCA's Central Forest management process.

A discussion followed the delegation. Jim Pearson stated that Users require more and better-quality trails in the Ganaraska Forest. Maureen McDonald requested that Alex clarify the information on the maps presented during the delegation. Alex explained that the GRCA map shows trails that are currently offered to the Users and the second map from a non-GRCA source identifies trails that Peterborough Trail Builders maintained under GRCA agreements and several other defunct trails that were abandoned when other group agreements dissolved.

Lance Nachoff questioned what the next actionable items or resolution is with the topic of trails in the Central Forest. The Chair informed the RUC that Staff are meeting with Alex Schmidt to discuss Cycling desires for the Central Forest.

RUC 18/24

MOVED BY:

Steve Brownell

SECONDED BY:

Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee receive the delegation for information.

CARRIED.

6. Presentations

None

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

8. Correspondence

None

9. New Business

a) To Consider Class 1 E-Bicycle for Use Within the Central Forest (Staff Report) and To Allow Class 1 E-Bicycle for Use Within the Central Forest (Notice of Motion)

At the September 5, 2024 RUC meeting a Notice of Motion to allow Class 1 E-mountain bike use within the Central Forest was moved by Alex Schmidt and seconded by Jim Pearson, which was Carried.

Alex Schmidt discussed the rationale for the Notice of Motion. Rationale included the Trek Bicycle Class 1 E-bicycle decibel study showed Class 1 E-bicycles to emit 40-55 decibels and that the international Mountain Bike Association (IBMA) trail study showed no significant trail impact difference between pedal mountain bike and Class 1 E-Bicycle and indicated that Class 1 E-Bicycles allow the rider to ride longer and climb hills faster than traditional pedal bicycles. Additionally, Alex expressed the potential for revenue generation options through Class 1 E-bicycle rental options provided by GRCA.

Ed Van Osch, Forest Recreation Technician, spoke to the staff report and reiterated that the Province of Ontario has a definition of E-Bicycle, which does not identify Class 1 E-Bicycles as a separate designation.

Peter Wood proposed a “Friendly Amendment” to the Motion, to use the Ontario E-Bicycle definition and rules in order to be inclusive to all Ganaraska Forest users. Alex Schmidt agreed to the “Friendly Amendment”. The Motion was amended to read: *To Consider Ontario Classified E-Bicycles for Use Within the Central Forest*. A discussion was had around adding the term “throttle” to the motion but after a long discussion it was decided not to do so.

Jim Pearson expressed concerns over increased traffic in the Central Forest and stated that the Horse Community does not support the use of E-Bicycles in the Central Forest. Lisa Thompson stated that EV-Dirt Bikes are virtually silent, and they are the way of the future. Alex Schmidt added that trail sharing, etiquette and construction are crucial to safe use and expressed that long sight lines are required to reduce conflict. Steve Brownell mentioned that with increasing populations there will inevitably be more users of the Ganaraska Forest and that more trails and signage is required to accommodate increased use. Jim Pearson stated that time money and effort will be required to provide more trails.

RUC 19/24

MOVED BY:

Carolyn Richards

SECONDED BY:

Gary Neice

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee Defer the Motion.
CARRIED.

b) Discussion on the 2.1 of the Terms of Reference to Provide Possible Recommendation to the Board of Directors

Steve Brownell, as a preamble to the Notice of Motion, stated local clubs have approached him declaring they do not have a voice on the RUC and their taxes fund the Ganaraska Forest and they are requesting a formal mechanism to obtain a seat as representatives on the RUC.

Pam Lancaster, Conservation Lands Coordinator, provided background information on the current (March 2023) RUC Terms of Reference (TOR). Pam highlighted that the TOR identifies an organization that represent the majority of Ontarians for each allowable use type in the Ganaraska Forest. Each representative organizations can appoint any person, regardless of organization affiliation, as their representative on the RUC. Further, each RUC member represents that particular use of the Ganaraska Forest, and Forest users do not have to belong to any organization in order to be represented.

Steve Brownell stated that local clubs should be allowed to hold a seat on the RUC. Lisa Thompson inquired to the definition of a local club and how would GRCA determine that designation. Steve Brownell stated that since the RUC is an advisory committee that there should be no limits on the number of clubs that can hold a seat on the RUC and that more voices will provide more input.

Carolyn Richards stated that she is not a member of Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs (OFATV), but that organization appointed her to represent and report back to the OFATV. Additionally, Carolyn stated that more than one use representative would complicate the RUC system and confuse Forest users. Carolyn identified that Forest Users are not just made up of local tax payers, but also people that travel from all over Ontario, Canada and USA to access the Ganaraska Forest.

Rick Trumper identified that Forest users residing within in one of the 4 municipalities that exist the Ganaraska Forest have a direct RUC representative through the Municipal appointed representatives.

After discussion, Steve Brownell amended the Motion to be: *Formal process for application for membership on the Recreational Users Committee, not limited to Provincial organizations nor limited to one user group.*

RUC 20/24

MOVED BY: Peter Wood
SECONDED BY: Carolyn Richards

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee Defer the Motion.
DEFEATED.

RUC 21/24

MOVED BY: Steve Brownell
SECONDED BY: Jim Pearson

THAT the Ganaraska Forest Recreational Users Committee recommend to the Board of Directors that the formal process for application for membership on the Recreational Users Committee be not limited to Provincial organizations nor limited to one user group.

DEFEATED.

10. Adjourn

Due to the good of the discussion on the agenda items and the time of night the Chair called for the adjournment of the meeting with other items to be carried to the next meeting.

RUC 22/24

MOVED BY:

Rick Trumper

SECONDED BY:


Jim Pearson

THAT the meeting adjourn at 9:32 pm.

CARRIED.

The next meeting of the Ganaraska Forest Recreational User Committee is Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Chair



Conservation Lands Coordinator

STAFF REPORT – November 28, 2024

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

Re: Highway 401 Expansion over the Ganaraska River and Impacts to Conservation Areas

Background

Over the past 10 years, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has been in communications with the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) regarding the widening of Highway 401 (herein called the 401) over the Ganaraska River.

In August 2023, the first official notice was received by the GRCA regarding the expropriation of lands that comprise the Port Hope Conservation Area (north of the 401 and west of the Ganaraska River, and the Ganaraska Millenium Conservation Area (north of the 401 and east of the Ganaraska River). As of September 1, 2024, a Temporary Limited Interest area and Fee Simple expropriated area has been taken by the MTO. This expropriation has resulted in the following.

Port Hope Conservation Area

As of September 1, 2024, the Port Hope Conservation Area has been closed to the public. The parking lot area of the property will become a staging area for 401 construction. In addition, an area approximately 400 square meters, that parallels the 401 right-of-way is has been expropriated (fee simple).

This closure will remain in place until May 1, 2029, which is the length of the Temporary Limited Interest agreement between the MTO and the GRCA. The length of the agreement may need to be extended if the project requires addition time.

Upon completion of the project, the parking lot, entrance, gates and signage will be reinstated by the MTO and its contractors.

GRCA staff have the ability to enter the property as required, and as approved by the onsite contractor or MTO.

Ganaraska Millennium Conservation Area

The Temporary Limited Interest between the MTO and GRCA related to this property is in place from September 1, 2024 to May 1, 2029. Similarly, there may be a need to extend the length of this agreement if the 401 project runs longer.

The Temporary Limited Interest area encompasses the boardwalk that is part of the Ganaraska Millennium Conservation Area trail. In order to provide a continuous trail during construction, the GRCA has relocated the boardwalk further north, out of the impacted area, and taking into consideration future interchange work that will happen over the next 10 plus years.

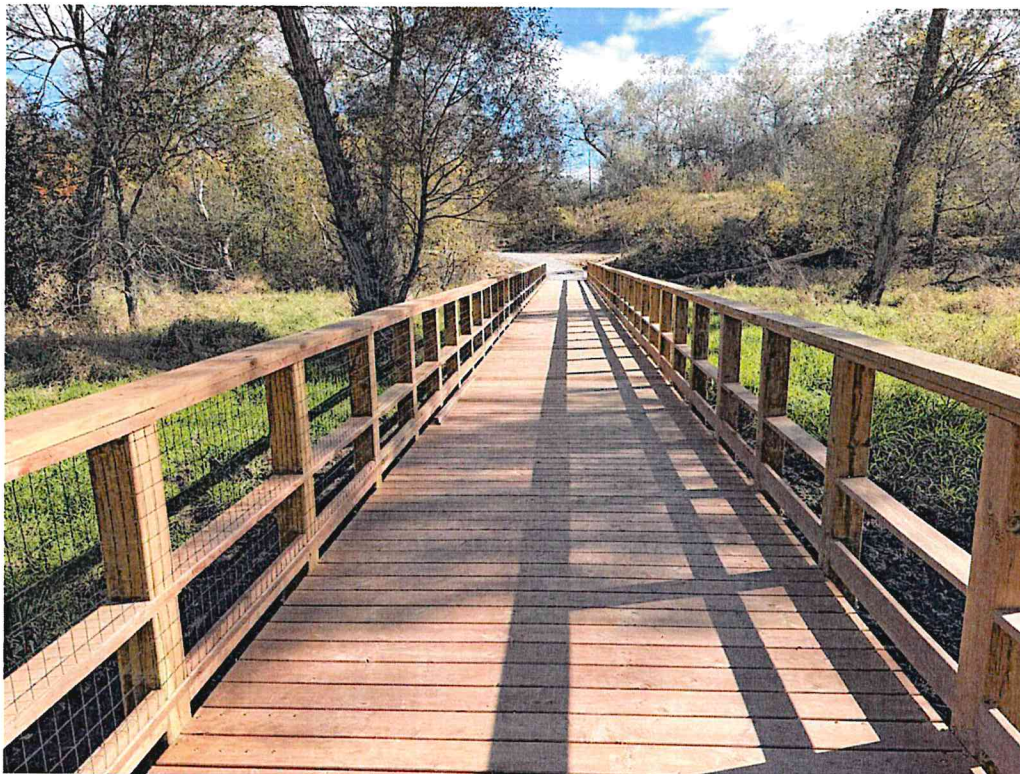
The new boardwalk was completed this fall, and includes helical piles, a taller deck height

so trail users can better see the wetland in the area, and hand railings, to conform to the Ontario Building Code. In addition, a new trail approach to the boardwalk was completed and the entire trail leading to and from the boardwalk has been improved by cutting back encroaching vegetation and treating invasive woody vegetation such as Buckthorn. In some locations, the trail has been re-routed away from the Ganaraska River where erosion was a concern.

The previous trail that extended further south from the new boardwalk location has been marked permanently closed on the East side of the wetland. Similarly, the trail along the Ganaraska River that extends south of the new boardwalk has been marked closed. When the 401 project is complete, consideration will be given to opening a trail link along this section to the municipal trails south of the 401, in partnership with the Municipality of Port Hope.

All of the work done to relocate the boardwalk was compensated by the MTO, in addition to the compensation associated with the Temporary Limited Interest and Fee Simple processes.

Throughout 2025, GRCA staff will continue to make improvements to the Ganaraska Millenium Conservation Area, including signage, additional invasive species treatment and trail surface improvements where needed.



New Boardwalk at Ganaraska Millenium Conservation Area

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board of Directors receive the Ganaraska Millenium Conservation Area Boardwalk and Improvements staff report for information.

Prepared by:



**Pam Lancaster, B.Sc.
Conservation Lands Coordinator**

Recommended by:



**Linda J. Laliberte, CPA, CGA
CAO / Secretary-Treasurer**

STAFF REPORT – November 28, 2024

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

Re: Ganaraska Forest Centre Gym Demolition and Proposed Rebuild

Background:

In 1976 the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) purchased the former Cold Springs Camp, previously run as a Junior Ranger facility by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). The purchase of the camp consisted of several buildings, which at the time contained a kitchen, dining hall and office building, dormitories with washrooms and a gymnasium along with several smaller buildings. The collection buildings became the Ganaraska Forest Centre and were utilized for outdoor environmental education beginning in 1976.

In the 1980's the Authority became aware that the on-site buildings had outlived their life span and commissioned an engineering study, which outlined the costs for capital redevelopment. A preliminary update to this study was completed in 1998. However, funds were not available to re-establish the buildings and the project was delayed.

In the mid 2000's, the Conservation Authority began a successful fundraising campaign and in September of 2009 the new Ganaraska Forest Centre opened. This building replaced the building that provided the dormitories and incorporated the kitchen and dining hall building under one roof along with office administration space. It was decided that the former dormitories would be removed however the washrooms, which had been recently reconstructed, that were attached to one side of the dormitories. would remain and be renovated to serve as public washrooms to the Ganaraska Forest users. The quonset hut, which housed the gymnasium and assembly space, would also remain on site and a mobile unit, obtained from the Town of Cobourg, was attached to this building which housed the forestry staff. It was also decided that the building that had served as the kitchen, dining hall and office administration would remain and be utilized for the weekend groups renting the GFC and storage. In 2011, when the GRCA entered into an agreement with Tree Top Trekking (TTT), a section of this building was leased to TTT for business operations.

Demolition and Proposed Rebuild:

During 2021 and 2022 the skylights in the gymnasium building, which had been leaking in the past, became increasingly worse and the floor became spongy and rotten. The replacement of skylights was investigated but it was to be very costly and no guarantee that it would remedy the situation. In about the same time a fire inspection report was received which listed some items that needed to be addressed should the building continue to be used as a gathering place for the public. As this was during Covid times, the decision was made to use the building for much-needed storage and not for public gatherings. In the May 19, 2022 budget staff report to the Board of Directors, demolition costs of \$50,000 were accommodated and the staff report noted more information to come. Two days after the staff report was received by the Board, the derecho storm hit

the region and the focus became the recovery of the Ganaraska Forest. The demolition of the gym has been included in the 2022, 2023 and 2024 budget. The demolition has been scheduled for December 2024. As preparations have been made to move the electricity and services that were attached to the gym, it has become apparent that the mobile building that has been housing staff, may be coming to the end of its useful life. Also, the building that has been serving as the weekend kitchen and home to TTT also needs to be evaluated as over the years the building has slowly been sinking in one corner. Over time this same building has been chewed by animals and repaired, had water damage that has had to been subject to remediation and abatement.

The structures at the GFC are legal, non-conforming in the Municipality of Port Hope's Zoning Bylaw. However, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, where the GFC is located, does allow for reconstruction of the building as long as the use does not change. Additionally, it does not appear as though there is a sunset clause requiring that the building be reconstructed within 24 months of demolition. GRCA has requested an acknowledgement of the above by Municipal staff. Additionally, there is the need to recapture the lost storage space and with the possible replacement of the mobile offices, there is a more immediate requirement to replace the building. Also, depending on the amount of work that may be required on the weekend/TTT building, a new building may be able to incorporate these uses as well. The building would use the same footprint as the building removed and would be approximately 4,000 square feet

As previously mentioned, \$50,000 was set aside to demolish the gym. The actual cost of the demolition will be around 25,000. Staff are suggesting the remaining funds be directed to get proposals to rebuild the gym. Once proposals are received, staff will look at internal sources of funding to use for the construction and bring a report back to the Board of Directors.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board of Directors receive the Ganaraska Forest Centre Gym Demolition and Proposed Rebuild staff report for information, and,

FURTHER THAT staff be authorized to move forward with a Request for Proposal for the Building Design with a staff report back to the Board of Directors.

Prepared by:



Linda J. Laliberte, CPA, CGA
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

STAFF REPORT – November 28, 2024

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

RE: Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy

At the September 19th, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting, the draft Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy was received for information by members, and direction was provided to staff to initiate public consultation.

The Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) conducted public consultation over 31 days from October 21st to November 18th to seek feedback on the draft Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy. During this time, a [project webpage](#) provided information on the initiative and included a comment form for formal comment submissions. The public was also encouraged to provide written comments to GRCA's general email.

A total of 5 comments were received during the consultation period. These comments were reviewed and are provided in the attached document. The comments provided were generally positive and did not result in any revisions to the [Draft Strategy](#).

The creation and adoption of the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy is an important step in assisting the GRCA with evolving and/or enhancing the delivery of programs and services that support mandatory Category 1 programs that serve municipal partners and the broader watershed community.

When approved, the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy will be made available on the GRCA website

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority receive the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy staff report for information; and,

FURTHER THAT the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority approve the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy.

Prepared by:



**Cory Harris, P.Eng.
Watershed Services Coordinator**

Recommended by:



**Linda J. Laliberte, CPA, CGA
CAO / Secretary-Treasurer**



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

1) GRCA Strategic Plan

To Explore is to Value Knowledge: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

To Learn is to Value Collaboration: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

To Lead is to Value Excellence: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

To Evolve is to Value Innovation: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

- *“It is critical not only to value the input of others, but it is important to act on especially time-sensitive important information. Too often, addressing important issues results in a lot of meetings and paperwork but not active undertaking until a crisis situation develops.”*
- *“These are all obviously positive points of view however it has to be emphasized that talk is cheap and action must reflect this.”*
- *“These are admiral goals. Key to this is ensuring that while you wish to evolve, inovate, lead, learn, explore... you MUST communicate transparently. There are many sources of information that are biased , and both sides of information must be considered. Development is a great example. You will have the NIMBY people , however keep in mind that they also have the most to lose in many scenarios. Transparent communication can educate , perhaps not placate.”*



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

2) GRCA Vision & Mission Statements

Vision: Clean Water, Healthy Land For Healthy Communities: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Mission: To enhance and conserve across the Ganaraska Region Watershed by serving, educating, informing and engaging. *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

- *“Engagement, especially with the rural community is dire especially when there are ever-increasing growth pressures being placed on the hamlets as well as the allowance now of ARUs on rural lands - lands that are dependent on either dug or drilled wells.”*
- *“Again, talk is cheap.”*
- *“Transparent communication is key. Responding to input, whether positive or negative will enhance credibility.”*
- *“More public meetings required for the ongoing education and understanding of risks to lakeshore and environmental concerns in region.”*



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

3) WBRMS Guiding Principles

1. Watershed-Based Management: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

2. Valuing Conservation Lands and Natural Assets: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	2	3

3. Shared Responsibility: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	2	3

4. Informed Decision-Making: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	0	4

5. Integration and Transparency: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

6. Community Engagement and Education: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	2	3

7. Sustainable Management Goals: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

8. Efficiency and Data Sharing: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

3) WBRMS Guiding Principles

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

- *“These guiding principles are commendable; however, they seem to become ineffective when dealing with the wishes of developers.”*
- *“If these statements are to have a positive impact upon the citizens then the policies implemented must reflect them. The current situation regarding the application for a subdivision seems to not reflect that. There appears to be a less than optimal response from a variety of agencies. The overall impact upon the community regarding the long term water supply is unknown and thus very frightening. The legal and moral responsibilities of this potential failure need to be addressed.”*
- *“Transparent communication is key. Responding to input, whether positive or negative will enhance credibility.”*
- *“More public meetings required for the ongoing education and understanding of risks to lakeshore and environmental concerns in region.”*



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

4) WBRMS Objectives

1. Water Management and Protection: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	0	5

2. Natural Hazard Risk Mitigation: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

3. Natural Heritage Conservation and Stewardship: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	0	5

4. Community Education and Engagement: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	0	5

5. Sustainable Community and Economic Development: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

6. Advancing Watershed Knowledge: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

- *“Watershed knowledge that both member of the public and municipal councils will clearly understand is of utmost importance. I would suggest under ‘data sharing’ that there might be a site where residents can directly report well water shortages/contamination issues. That water haulers also be invited to report well shortages. That information, while confidential, could be used to map possible areas for more study/protection etc.”*
- *“I must emphasize that this survey is only valuable if there are actions taken that reflect the views expressed. The citizens of Garden Hill have legitimate fears that the process is more about public pronouncements than about actually protecting the public.”*



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

5) Watershed Challenges

Increased Development Pressures: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

Climate Change: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Invasive Species: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	2	3

Loss of Biodiversity and Species At Risk: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	2	3

Soil Carbon: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

Soil Erosion: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

Agricultural Land Use: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

The Use of Sub-Watershed Planning in Land Use / Development Planning: *(Required)*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4



GRCA WATERSHED-BASED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SURVEY RESPONSES

5) Watershed Challenges

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

- *“Currently the residents of Garden Hill are terrified the safety and security of their water supply will be negatively impacted by the plan to construct ‘estate’ homes and an apartment complex. Hydrogeological reports prepared for the developer has pointed out several concerns about supply and water quality, but these issues have fallen on deaf ears. Surrounding residents are dependent on dug wells. The development site has a high water table that will be impacted by the grading that will be required. That will put their water supply at risk. There are also plans for stormwater ponds backing onto their wells. Existing residents in Garden Hill have already reported water shortages. One Garden Hill resident has reported an artesian spring on his property which once flowed 3 feet above ground is now over 21 feet below ground.”*
- *“How can planning be considered important at the same time as it’s being dismissed?”*

Survey – Draft Watershed-Based Resources Management Strategy

1) GRCA Strategic Plan

In 2020, the GRCA prepared, [Vision 2020 – A Review That Illuminates the Future](#), to summarize our accomplishments and allow reflection on how best to continue momentum into the future. The GRCA Strategic Plan will be updated in the future after completion of the WBRMS.

Please rate the importance of the commitments included in the strategic plan.

To Explore is to Value Knowledge: *(Required)*

Knowledge has power. We value up-to-date knowledge and the wisdom of our staff and others. We are committed to working with others to build knowledge through research and information sharing.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

To Learn is to Value Collaboration: *(Required)*

We value the input of others. We listen and we learn from those who have an interest in how we carry out our responsibilities. We are a solution-focused organization. We promote teamwork because we value our partners and our partnerships.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

To Lead is to Value Excellence: *(Required)*

We value honesty, openness and accountability. We will focus on being accountable to ourselves and to one another. We are committed to service and business excellence, and we will be driven to earn the trust of those we serve.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

To Evolve is to Value Innovation: *(Required)*

Innovation comes from knowledge and critical thinking. Leading edge organizations are those that emphasize learning and focus on what they can do to foster a culture of innovation. We encourage innovation in order to continuously improve.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

0 of 2000 max characters

2) GRCA Vision & Mission Statements

Please rate each statement by how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

Vision: Clean Water, Healthy Land For Healthy Communities *(Required)*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Mission: To enhance and conserve across the Ganaraska Region Watershed by serving, educating, informing and engaging. *(Required)*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

0 of 2000 max characters

3) WBRMS Guiding Principles

Through a review of background documentation and GRCA's strategic plan, the following guiding principles have been developed to meet the requirements of the [Conservation Authorities Act](#) and [Ontario Regulation 686/21](#), as well as to inform the design and delivery of GRCA's programs and services.

Please rate each principle by how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1. Watershed-Based Management: *(Required)*

Conservation, restoration, development, and management of natural resources are most effective when implemented on a watershed basis, which provides a comprehensive framework for assessing and managing resource conditions and risks.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

2. Valuing Conservation Lands and Natural Assets: *(Required)*

Water and other natural resources are crucial for climate resilience, hazard (flood and erosion) mitigation, contaminant filtration, waste assimilation, biodiversity, and providing recreational spaces.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

3. Shared Responsibility: *(Required)*

Effective management of water and natural resources requires collaboration among Conservation Authorities, Municipalities, government agencies, First Nations, private landowners, and other stakeholders.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

4. Informed Decision-Making: *(Required)*

Watershed-based management strategies guide policies and decisions, ensuring they reflect community needs, ecosystem requirements, and a range of values.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

5. Integration and Transparency: *(Required)*

Resource management decisions should be integrated, transparent, and consider the diverse uses and values of the community, fostering trust and engagement among stakeholders.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

6. Community Engagement and Education: *(Required)*

Building strong relationships through collaboration, transparency, and public education promotes environmental stewardship and active participation in conservation efforts.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

7. Sustainable Management Goals: *(Required)*

Decision-making should be guided by clear, sustainable water management goals, targets, and risk prevention strategies that consider long-term environmental, economic, and community needs.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

8. Efficiency and Data Sharing: *(Required)*

Optimize benefits of sustainable water management with minimal cost, utilizing the best available scientific information and promoting data sharing among stakeholders and various levels of government for effective coordination.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

0 of 2000 max characters

4) WBRMS Objectives

Flowing from the direction in the strategic plan and the principles identified above, the following objectives have been developed to meet the requirements of Ontario Regulation 686/21 and relate to Mandatory Programs and Services (C

Municipal and Other Programs and Services (Category 2 and 3). Category 2 and Category 3 programs are essential to the support and delivery of Category 1 programs and services.

Please rate each objective by how much you agree or disagree with the statement/objectives.

Priority 1: Water Management and Protection *(Required)*

Objectives:

- Protect drinking water resources by implementing measures that reduce risks to water quality and availability.
- Characterize and monitor groundwater and surface water systems to support sustainable, clean water supply.
- Strengthen hydro-ecological functions to prepare for flood or drought conditions, reducing potential risks to public health and safety.
- Foster integrated planning for watershed management decisions to ensure the sustained beneficial uses of water resources.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Priority 2: Natural Hazard Risk Mitigation *(Required)*

Objectives:

- Avoid, reduce, or mitigate potential risks to public health and safety, and to property, from flooding and other natural hazards.
- Decrease local vulnerability to climatic extremes through adaption and mitigation strategies.
- Work collaboratively with municipalities and stakeholders to develop and implement natural hazard prevention and management strategies.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Priority 3: Natural Heritage Conservation and Stewardship *(Required)*

Objectives:

- Conserve and maintain Conservation Authority-owned lands to protect natural heritage, support outdoor recreation, and contribute to community well-being.
- Ensure the maintenance of biodiversity by protecting critical habitats and ecosystems within the watershed.
- Promote conservation and minimize degradation of natural resources through stewardship programs and community engagement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Priority 4: Community Education and Engagement *(Required)*

Objectives:

- Educate and engage the watershed community to raise awareness of natural hazards, watershed health, and the importance of protecting land and water resources.
- Inspire community action and participation in conservation efforts through targeted educational programs and stewardship initiatives.
- Support the development of environmental awareness and promote actions that contribute to the health and resilience of the watershed.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Priority 5: Sustainable Community and Economic Development *(Required)*

Objectives:

- Support sustainable, healthy communities by integrating watershed knowledge into municipal and regional planning processes.
- Promote social and economic development that aligns with the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Identify and address key resource issues and stressors that impact the watershed, advocating for policies and funding that support sustainable management.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Priority 6: Advancing Watershed Knowledge *(Required)*

Objectives:

- Advance watershed knowledge through research, monitoring, and data sharing to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Identify, understand, and prioritize key resource issues, and develop solutions that adapt programs and services to address emerging challenges.
- Promote the use of best available scientific information to guide the management and protection of watershed resources.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

0 of 2000 max characters

5) Watershed Challenges

Through watershed knowledge and a review of background information, the following watershed challenges were identified that should be considered as part of the GRCA's program and services delivery in the coming years.

Please rate each challenge by how much you agree or disagree with the challenge.

Increased Development Pressures: *(Required)*

The expansion of urban boundaries poses risks to natural areas, watercourses, and wetlands, as increased impervious surfaces lead to higher stormwater runoff, which can exacerbate flooding, erosion, and water quality issues.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Climate Change: *(Required)*

A major challenge is the lack of integrated management of groundwater and surface water, making it difficult to address climate variability effectively.

One critical challenge is the missing link between groundwater and surface water management, which is essential for maintaining water quality and quantity in the face of climate variability.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Invasive Species: *(Required)*

Invasive species are a another pressing concern, as they outcompete native flora and fauna, disrupt ecosystem balance, and degrade habitats.

Species such as the emerald ash borer, phragmites, and dog–strangling vine have already impacted the region, and their continued spread poses ongoing risks to biodiversity and ecosystem function.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Loss of Biodiversity and Species At Risk: *(Required)*

The Ganaraska Region is home to a variety of species at risk (SAR), whose habitats are increasingly threatened by development, invasive species, and climate change.

Loss of biodiversity not only diminishes the ecological resilience of the watershed but also reduces the range of ecosystem services it provides, such as clean water, flood regulation, and recreational opportunities.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Soil Carbon: *(Required)*

As temperatures rise, the increased heat accelerates microbial activity in the soil, leading to faster decomposition of organic matter, which releases stored carbon back into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide, while altered precipitation patterns disrupt soil moisture levels.

These combined effects lead to a destabilization of carbon stored in the soil, weakening its role as a natural carbon sink and contributing to higher levels of atmospheric greenhouse gases, which perpetuate climate change.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Soil Erosion: *(Required)*

The vulnerability of soil is heightened under shifting climate conditions, with heavy rains leading to erosion and droughts causing desiccation, making land less stable and less capable of supporting vegetation.

This, in turn, contributes to increased sedimentation in water bodies, impacting water quality and raising the costs associated with water treatment for safe human consumption. Moreover, the erosion of natural buffers, such as wetlands and forests, further exacerbates flood risks and reduces the natural capacity of the environment to filter pollutants.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Agricultural Land Use: *(Required)*

Agricultural land use covers approximately one-third of the Ganaraska Region watershed. The GRCA has historically had areas with severe erosion and soil degradation issues resulting from land clearing activities in the late 1800s/early 1900s.

Although reforestation restored much of the landscape, there is a need to continue to take a support proactive approaches to controlling crop field erosion and improving soil health, in addition to the other best management practices that agricultural producers implement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

The Use of Sub–Watershed Planning in Land Use / Development Planning: *(Required)*

A significant gap in current watershed management is the absence of comprehensive sub–watershed planning in the development process.

Sub-watershed plans are critical for understanding the unique characteristics and needs of different areas within the watershed, guiding sustainable land use decisions, and ensuring that growth does not compromise the ecological integrity of the region.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

Your Comments / Questions

Please include any comments or questions you may have about this section.

0 of 2000 max characters

Conclusion & Consent

The Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy will be reviewed and updated internally by GRCA staff on a regular basis so that it remains a current working document for staff.

While the survey will be closing on November 18, 2024, GRCA would welcome any input and feedback from the community, even after the survey has closed.

Written comments can be submitted to info@grca.on.ca.

Email

Please provide your email address if you wish to receive responses to your questions or the results of the survey.

Postal Code

By providing your postal code, the GRCA is able to get a sense of where entries have been submitted from.

Any Additional Comments or Questions?

Please include any additional comments or questions you may have about this draft strategy.

0 of 2000 max characters

Consent *(Required)*

I have read and agree to the [GRCA Privacy Policy](#).

Submit