

"Greening Chatham-Kent...and Beyond"

Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority Celebrates 50 Years of Conservation

In 1961, the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) was established as a local agency for flood control and flood warning along the lower Thames River, with the Province of Ontario and local municipalities. Over five decades, our vision has been challenging and fulfilling, working with local farmers, landowners, industry, government and others to protect and enhance the environment. With our Administration Building in Chatham, we are your one-stop local environmental agency!

The LTVCA is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario. Our jurisdiction, the lower watershed of the Thames River, covers 3,275 square km in southwestern Ontario and is home to 109,709 people. LTVCA member municipalities appoint representatives



Lighthouse Cove Conservation Area, is located at the mouth of the Thames River at Lake St. Clair. The Lighthouse is nearly 200 years old and is one of three oldest on the Great Lakes.

to a Board of Directors, from Chatham-Kent, Lakeshore, Leamington, Dutton-Dunwich, West Elgin, Southwest Middlesex, Strathroy-Caradoc, Southwold, Middlesex Centre and London.

The LTVCA leads in the protection and management of water and other natural resources in the watershed. Lives and property are protected from flooding and erosion, and natural habitats are conserved and restored. Our focus remains water management and monitoring water quality and quantity of the lower Thames River and the Lake Erie shoreline. The Indian/McGregor Creek Flood Control Dam and Diversion Channel - a major LTVCA project - protects south Chatham and area from flooding, while a scientific flood warning system warns municipalities of high river and creek waters. We advise landowners of natural hazards to avoid through our plan review, and recommend safe development procedures to benefit landowners and protect sensitive habitats and the creatures that call them "home". The LTVCA also plays a key role in the plan to protect sources of municipal drinking water.

Managing resources using "watershed boundaries" is unique to Conservation Authorities. What we do upstream affects those downstream and has impacts on the ground and surface water. We aim to wisely manage all the natural resources - water, forests, wildlife and soils. In fact, more than two million trees have been planted by the LTVCA over the past 35 years on private and public lands with help from many partners. In Chatham-Kent, the goal is to increase forest cover to over 10% through an ambitious "greening



Spring is the time for tree planting and the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority is busy working in partnership with local farmers, landowners, industries and municipalities to "green-up" the watershed.

strategy" with the local community. Habitat restoration projects are now increasing, with the swing to create a healthy environment for a healthy lifestyle on the rise.

Watershed residents are proud of the Thames' designation in 2000 as a Canadian Heritage River. We celebrate its rich cultural and historical features, recreational opportunities and biological significance. For instance, the Thames River watershed lies completely within the Carolinian Canada Life Zone - a unique ecological habitat in southern Canada sometimes known as the "banana belt". One-third of the rare, threatened and endangered species found in all of Canada and sixty-five percent of Ontario's rare plants are found in the region". (www.carolinian.org). The LTVCA's environmental programs are designed to protect and restore our special place in Canada!

Twenty-five conservation areas in the LTVCA, provide opportunities to enjoy, learn about and respect nature, within an hour's drive of home. Take

a hike, bird watch, picnic, fish, camp, swim, cross-country ski, snowshoe or even ice skate. Bring your school to enjoy an education program outside and beyond the classroom. For heritage buffs, tour Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum or visit the Lighthouse. We even provide "in the field" venues for environmental training and volunteering opportunities.

The Directors and staff of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority are proud of all these achievements and recognize local champions and partners every step of the way! Please drop us a line at 519-354-7310 or email at admin@ltvca.ca. Visit us at our Administration Building at 100 Thames Street in Chatham or online at www.ltvca.ca.

