

Working in partnership toward the *greening* of Chatham-Kent

WINTER EDITION

The Greening Partnership is an agreement between The Municipality of Chatham-Kent, the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) and St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA), to green our municipality through tree plantings, tallgrass prairie, and wetland restoration.

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GRANTS *Return on Investment: The Greening Partnership has a proven track record of providing roughly 3 dollars into restoration for every dollar invested by Chatham-Kent.*

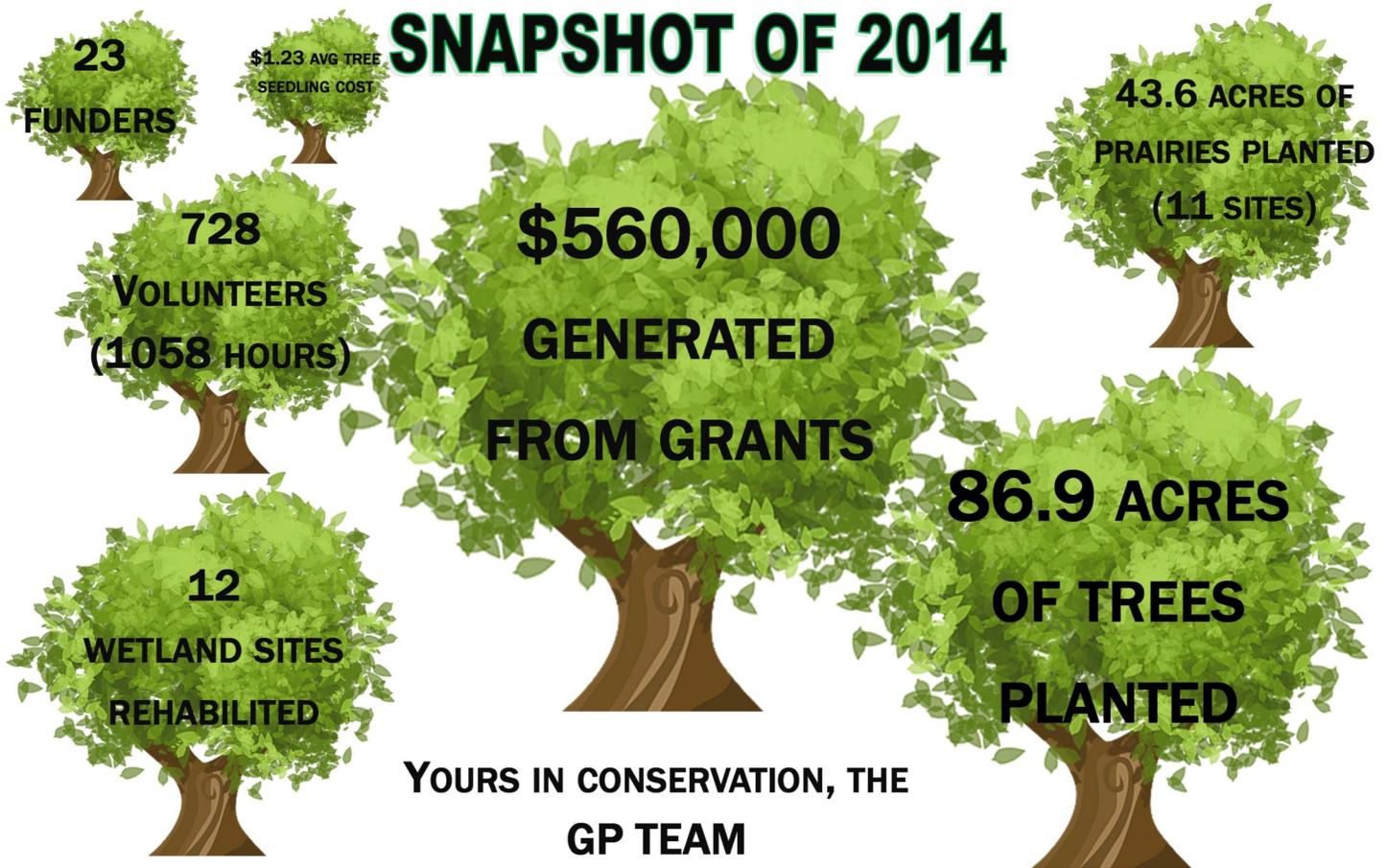
Greening Partnership staff have been busy over winter applying for various grants in order to leverage funds. Since December 1st, 2014, the Greening Partnership has applied for 12 grants in the amount of **\$476,500**. These grants include: TD Green Streets, Land Stewardship Habitat Restoration Program, Species At Risk, Loblaw's Water Fund, DFO- Recreational Fisheries, RBC Water Fund, Walmart Evergreen, MEC, South Kent Wind Energy- Community Fund, Scott-Miracle Gro Company, Environmental Damages Fund, and The John and Pat Charitable Foundation. If approved this grant money would cover a variety of different projects including: large stock trees, CM Wilson Conservation Area's Pond remediation, a benthic program, trail signs, Tree of the year program, Phosphorus Loss Reduction program and various wetland projects.

AWARD *The Greening Partnership Environmental Award recognized landowners by acknowledging and celebrating the important work of existing stewards and creating interest for future stewards to participate in the program.*

The Greening Partnership Environmental Award is presented quarterly to two landowners; one school and one business who have undertaken exceptional stewardship projects. The award was hand-carved by Highgate's chainsaw artist - Robin Wenzowski. Recipients keep the award for a couple months and then it is given to the next winner. The recipients of this year's landowner award are **Sharon and Art Alliet** and **Steve Myslik**. These landowners have implemented wetland projects on their properties in 2014 and are active in restoration.



Sharon and Art Alliet— recipients of the Greening Partnership Environmental Award. Photo credit: Trevor Thompson



NATURAL HERITAGE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (NHIS)

The purpose of this Implementation Strategy is to identify how the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will work with all sectors of the community to maintain and enhance the natural heritage system within the municipality and manage collectively, the greater ecological goods and services that are a benefit to all members of society.

In July 2014, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Council passed the Natural Heritage Implementation Strategy (NHIS), which identifies 29 recommendations for conservation improvements. One of these recommendations is the creation of a Natural Heritage Sustainability Committee. Jeff Bray, the Manager of Parks, Horticulture and Cemeteries has been working to assemble the Natural Heritage Sustainability Committee (which is different from the Sustainability Review Team identified in the Official Plan). Requests were mailed to all major stakeholders in Mid-March.

This Committee will oversee the Greening Partnership staff, provide direction, take results and present the data back to Council.

The intention of this Committee is to monitor the rate and amount of tree removal, reports to Council and determine whether additional measures need to be recommended for consideration. It is also recommended that one of the Committee's roles include providing input to the Sustainability Review Team to keep them aware of the changes on the landscape. This will enable the Review Team to make appropriate decisions related to policy and municipal programs in response to those changes. Given the representation on the Committee, it would be beneficial for them to go beyond simply monitoring and reporting on the amount of tree removal by identifying annual priorities for natural heritage conservation/stewardship efforts.

IN THE COMMUNITY

The Greening Partnership must be active in engaging the community in order for the NHIS to succeed.



Wednesday January 28th, 2015 Mike Battenham at LTVCA booth

CHATHAM-KENT FARM SHOW – Staff were present at the 2nd Annual Chatham-Kent Farm Show on Wednesday January 28th and 29th. Mike Battenham, the Agricultural Specialist presented “Keeping Nutrients Where Applied and Available for the Crop”. His presentation discussed why Lake Erie is susceptible to Algae Blooms, what Harmful Algae Blooms (HAB) are and how we can be proactive. He discussed Best Management Practices (BMPs) and how to implement the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Strategy.

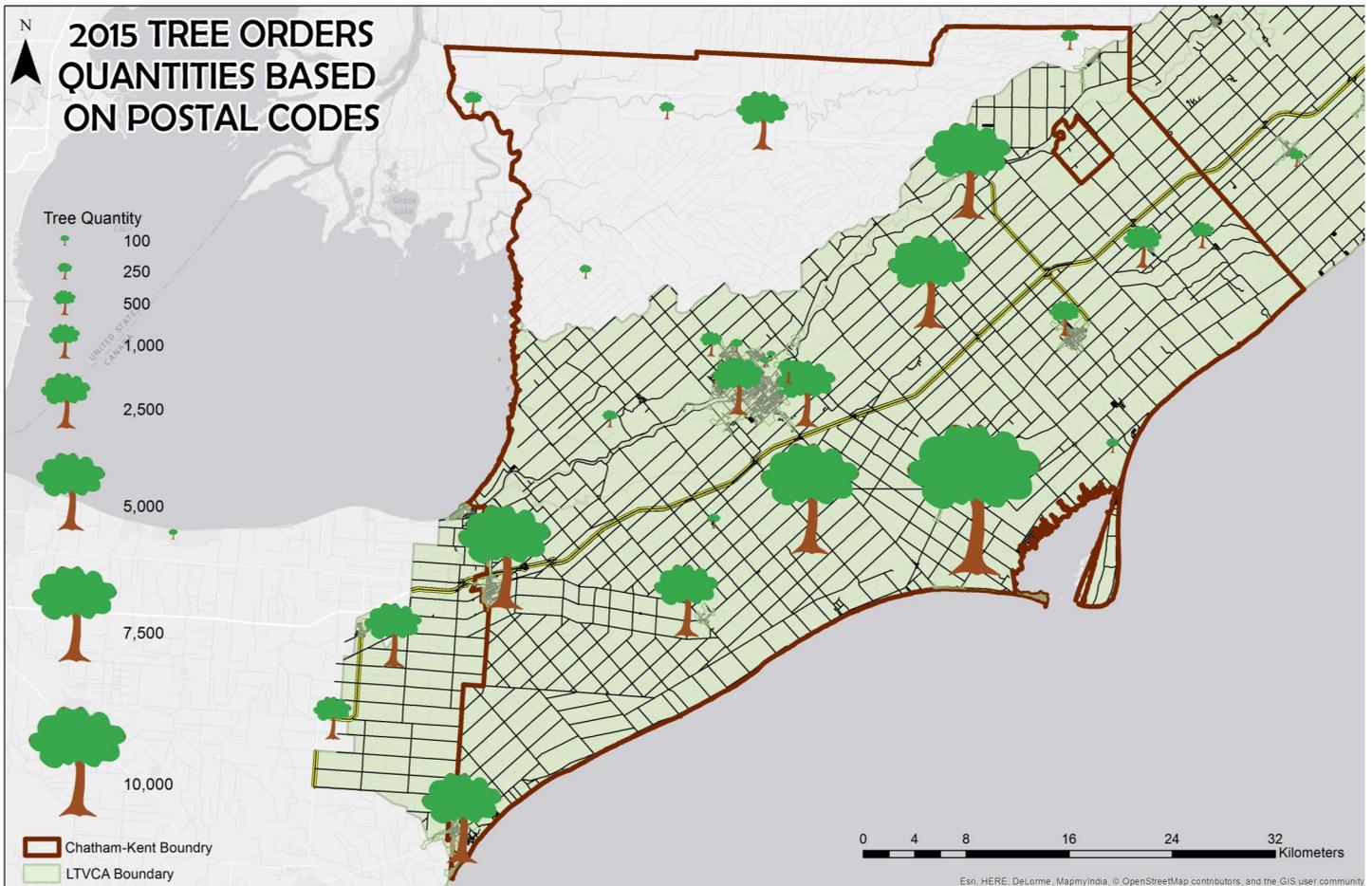
GREENING PARTNERHSIP OPEN HOUSE – The Greening Partnership hosted an open house on February 11th from 9 - 11am and again from 4 -7pm. It was advertised in various newspapers, our Facebook page, the Cogeco community events calendar, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Events Calendar and the radio. The Open House was a success with over 40 people coming to discuss projects and take home information on restoration and funding opportunities.

HERITAGE TREE PROJECT – Filming of the Heritage tree movie by Wes Macdonald has begun. Wes recently showcased his film, “Caroline: Trees, People, Politics” with great success. Heritage Trees of Chatham-Kent is a community project supported by The Chatham Horticultural Society, LTVCA and Communities in Bloom. The Heritage Tree Committee of Chatham-Kent was established in 2014 to promote appreciation of the significant native and introduced tree species in the Municipality. This project was initiated to create awareness about outstanding specimens of interesting and unusual trees in CK. Representative trees of the Municipality’s diverse flora will be selected and plaqued based on their interest, rarity, size and accessibility with the generous cooperation of the landowners. Once trees are identified, measured and documented, a map will be produced to provide locations of each specimen. Many of these trees represent a portion of the natural heritage of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

What is a Heritage Tree?

- A notable specimen because of its size, form, shape, beauty, age, colour, rarity, genetic constitution or other distinctive features;
- A living relic that displays evidence of cultural modification by Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people, including strips of bark or knot-free wood removed, test hole cut to determine soundness, furrows cut to collect pitch or sap, or blazes to mark a trail;
- A prominent community landmark;
- A specimen associated with a historic person, place, event or period;
- A representative of a crop grown by ancestors and their successors that is at risk of disappearing from cultivation;
- A tree associated with local folklore, myths, legends, or traditions.

TREE ORDERS



Over 90,000 tree seedlings were sold through the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority 2015 tree planting program. Over 80,000 of these trees are being planted in Chatham-Kent, over 3000 in Dutton-Dunwich, 3000 in Leamington, 250 in Southwest Middlesex, 1600 in West Elgin, 3490 in Lakeshore, 500 in Southwold, 300 in Strathroy-Caradoc and 85 in Middlesex Centre. We are looking forward to the busy Spring planting season. Remember, tree orders are due in the middle of March every year, and if interested contact us and we can put you on the waiting list or on the list for next year!

WORKING TOWARDS A GREENER TOMORROW

The Greening Partnership utilizes partners to subsidize restoration projects.

Over the winter months we have been working with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to finalize spring plantings along the 401. A total of 10,000 seedlings will be planted across five different priority sites. We are also working on a five-year commitment with MTO which would fund the planting of 10,000 seedlings a year.



KEY PARTNERS

The Greening Partnership connects with partners for financial and technical support.



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND FORESTRY (MNR) - LAKE ERIE MANAGEMENT UNIT (LEMU)

– On January 19th representatives from LEMU, LTVCA, Ducks Unlimited, and the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Drainage Superintendent met to discuss Rondeau Bay Rehabilitation Projects. LEMU will be applying to Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) for funding for the next five years for the Rondeau Bay watershed to support Green Infrastructure, wetland restoration, riparian buffers and grassed waterways. Ducks Unlimited will fund projects that create habitat for waterfowl and are able to contribute funds to cover 25% of the project costs to the maximum \$5000. These funded projects require a 15-year agreement with the landowners. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent is looking to start a program for grassed berms and have also started cutting *Phragmites* along drains which has been successful thus far. Increase communication and interaction between all partners is the key to success of the rehabilitation of Rondeau Bay.

WETLAND PROJECT– Over the winter, we began Phase 1 of wetland construction on various sites across Chatham-Kent. A total of eight sites have been excavated and are ready for spring plantings of tallgrass prairie and trees. Wetlands represent one of the most important life support systems in the natural environment. They have beneficial systems that create an irreplaceable habitat that promotes biodiversity, acts as a natural shore line protection, sources water recharge areas and works as a reservoir to control and reduce flooding. Eight additional wetland projects will be restored later in 2015. Partners of these projects include MNR, Ducks Unlimited, National Wetland Conservation Fund (NWCF) and Great Lakes Guardian Fund.



Jeanette's Creek Gun Club wetland project on February 9th, 2015.



One of the contractors, Bob Lauzon, inspecting the wetland site.



Excavator in action creating the wetland on February 11th, 2015.

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS (OMAFRA)

The Greening Partnership received funding from OMAFRA to hire an Agricultural Specialist, who will be focused on stewardship and education with the agricultural community.

STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS – This winter, farmers have actively inquired about windbreaks and various Best Management Practices (BMPs) for their properties. A farmer in Elgin County installed a bed level crossing on his farm so he could get across Talbot Creek in a safe and non-destructive way. This dairy farmer was able to apply for cost-sharing savings to an amount of 90% coverage. Grants were obtained through both the Species at Risk Farm Improvement Program (SARFIP) and the Elgin Clean Water Program.



Installation of bed level crossing.

OMAFRA RESEARCH PROJECTS – The erosion modeling in the Rondeau Bay watershed is progressing. This spring LTVCA staff will be going in the field to examine the computer results and compare them against actual infield erosion. Variables such as weather data, elevation, soil type and slope are incorporated. The tile monitoring project examines and tracks phosphorus leaving drainage tiles. A remote weather station and tile monitoring devices are being installed this spring. From that,

baseline data will be acquired to compare weather events to phosphorus leaving a tile.

ST. CLAIR SOIL AND CROP IMPROVEMENT

ASSOCIATION– The Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) and the LTVCA have partnered to produce quarterly articles for the St. Clair Soil and Crop Improvement Association newsletter. These articles inform farmers and the agricultural community on various grant opportunities and environmental topics. A link to the St. Clair Soil and Crop Improvement Association website is as follows: <https://scscia.wordpress.com/>



FINAL REMARKS AS AGRICULTURAL

SPECIALIST – Unfortunately, my time at the LTVCA will be coming to a close on April 15 as I leave for a new opportunity as *Sustainability and Environment Specialist* with *Grain Farmers of Ontario*. I appreciate the opportunity to work as the Agricultural Specialist at the LTVCA and value the relationships I have established with farmers, landowners and organizations during my time in Chatham. I will still remain active with the agricultural community as I strive to improve Ontario's soil, water and air - just for a different organization. Thanks again, and I will miss working with you all – **Mike Buttenham**.

GREENING PARTNERSHIP

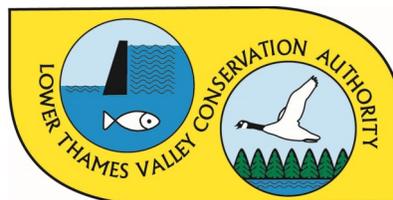
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LOOKING AHEAD TO SPRING 2015

1. Union Gas –Earth Day Event at Grand Ave Water Treatment Plant –April 22nd at 10am
2. Big “O” Birding event -May 3rd at 10am. Please RSVP Randall.VanWagner@ltvca.ca
3. Working with CK Horticultural Society on “Tree of the Year” which will provide large stock trees to residents
4. Planting an additional 10,000 seedlings along the 401 with the Ministry of Transportation Partnership
5. Launch of Green Up CK
6. Sign Installations at Big “O”, McGeachy’s Pond and Merlin Conservation Areas
7. Updating the Greening Partnership tab on the new LTVCA website

FUNDERS

Blenheim News Tribune	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Chatham Daily News	Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Chatham Kent Community Foundation	Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Chatham This Week	National Wetland Conservation Fund
Ducks Unlimited Canada	Ontario Power Generation
Enbridge	Rotary Club of Chatham
Environment Canada	Scribendi Editing
Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario	Sun Media News
GDF Suez	TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Great Lakes Guardian Fund	The Ridgeway Independent
Kent Federation of Agriculture	Trees Ontario
Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation	Union Gas, a Spectra Energy Company
	Wheatley Two Creeks Association

CALL US TODAY! FUNDING AVAILABLE

WE HAVE NATURAL RESTORATION INCENTIVES FOR:

WETLANDS

TALLGRASS PRAIRIES



WINDBREAKS

SPILLWAYS



BUFFER STRIPS

TREE PLANTATIONS



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