

# Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority 2020 Annual Report Highlights

*'continuing vital programs & services for the people  
of our watershed during difficult times'*

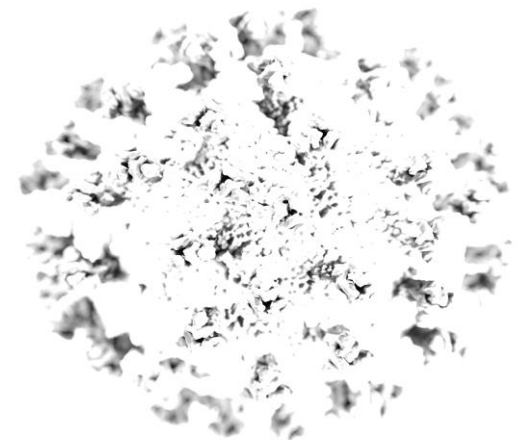
June 9, 2020 Sharon Creek Conservation Area  
Municipality of Middlesex Centre



# FIGURING OUT!

## *SAFELY PROVIDING SERVICES TO RESIDENTS IN CHALLENGING TIMES*

- 75% of 2020 was overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the months since the pandemic began, we have all worked to adhere to the direction of public health officials & government guidelines.
- LTVCA has prepared and follows a Pandemic Management Plan, a COVID-19 Safety Plan and COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures for all the work we do outside of the home.
- While providing almost all services to the public, staff have limited their high risk activities and worked from home as much as possible.
- Some of our business areas such as in person environmental education classes have been reduced. Other business areas have expanded to deliver much needed services.
- We have adapted to the new environment and have learned to manage significant professional and personal pressures. **Thank you for your support!**



# ABOUT US

## Our Vision

The LTVCA...for  
a balanced &  
healthy  
watershed

## Our Mission

Leading by example  
in environmental  
protection in  
partnership with  
the community

## Our Core Values

Respect, integrity,  
commitment, objectivity, &  
collaboration



# PRIORITIES

**Protecting life & property**

**Protecting drinking water sources**

**Enhancing watershed health**

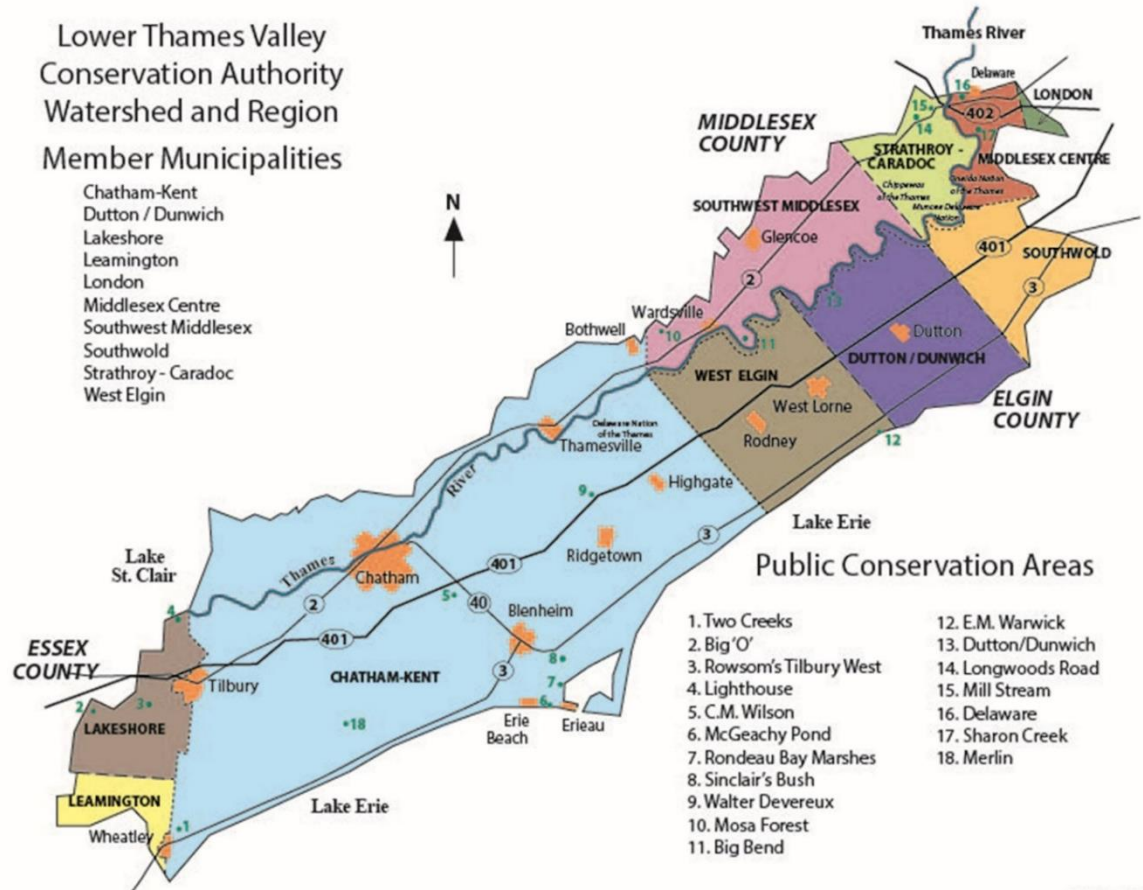
**Stepping into nature**

**Partnering with the community**



# OUR AREA OF JURISDICTION

- area covers approximately 3,274 square kilometers (1,264 square miles) & is home to over 100,000 people.



# OUR DIRECTORS & MUNICIPALITIES

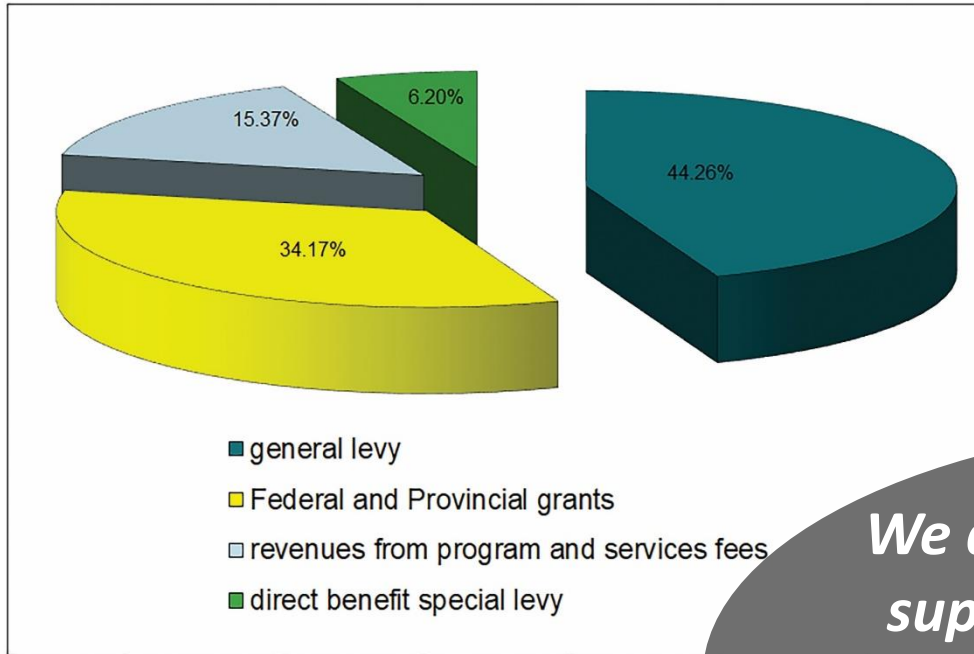
- **Linda McKinlay (Chair) – Town of Lakeshore**
- Trevor Thompson (Vice-Chair) – Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- Kimble Ainslie – City of London
- Christa Cowell – Municipality of Southwest Middlesex
- Sarah Emons – Township of Southwold
- Amy Finn – Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- Jeannie Frawley – Municipality of Middlesex Centre
- Mike Hentz – Municipality of Dutton Dunwich
- Sandi Hipple – Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc
- Richard Leatham – Municipality of West Elgin
- Paul Tiessen – Municipality of Leamington
- John Wright – Municipality of Chatham-Kent



*Linda McKinlay – Chair*



# \$ BUDGET \$



*We acknowledge the financial support of our 10 watershed member municipalities, our many granting partners & dedicated volunteers!*

**LTVCA's budget of \$3,304,046 received approval in February**

# LTVCA STAFF



*Mark Peacock –  
CAO / Secretary-Treasurer*

**Staff**  
**25 full-time /**  
**long-term contract**  
**20 seasonal / part-time**





# Wishing you the best!

**Paul  
Kominek**

Western District Supervisor  
2016-2020



*“movin’ on”*

# PROTECTING LIFE & PROPERTY

## Water Management

Conservation Authorities are on the front lines of the **Provincial Flood Forecasting & Warning Program**, & undertake floodplain mapping; modeling; monitor streamflow, rainfall & snowpacks; issue warnings; acquire floodplain lands & flood vulnerable structures; & operate dams, dykes, channels & erosion control structures.



**111**  
flood messages  
issued





# PROTECTING LIFE & PROPERTY

## Water Management

- **Flood Forecasting & Warning**

### *Thames River –*

- January rains produced high water levels on Thames, & 6th Street Backwater Dam & Pumping Station was operated for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row
- The dam closed on January 14th, & pumping operations continued until the dam reopened on January 17th
- Flooding to businesses on King St. in Chatham
- High water levels on L. St. Clair & strong NW wind occurred at the same time, causing flooding in Lighthouse Cove
- Indian-McGregor Creek Diversion Channel operated 3 times in 2020

### *Along the Shorelines –*

- High water levels on L. Erie created problems for the shoreline
- Damage occurred to shoreline protection works & bluff erosion increased
- Flooding occurred from Wheatley to Port Glasgow
- Erie Shore Drive was hardest hit & road was closed for repairs
- Lighthouse Cove was near flooding for much of the year, also as a result of high lake levels
- Damaging winds impacted the shorelines causing erosion

# PROTECTING LIFE & PROPERTY

## Water Management

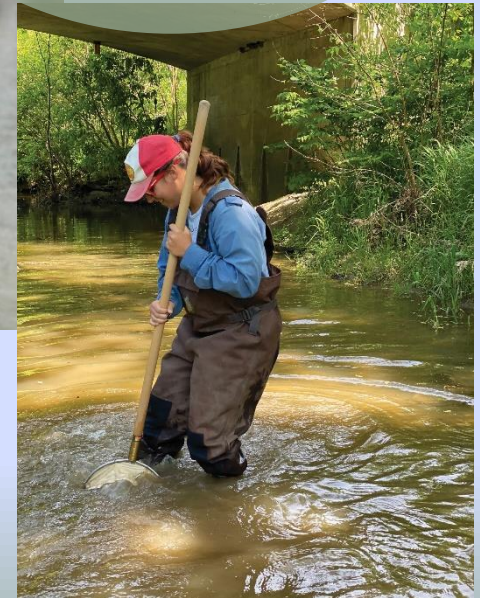
- **Water quality monitoring sites**

- partnership continued with Ministry of the Environment, Conservation & Parks on the Provincial Groundwater & the Provincial (Stream) Water Quality Monitoring Programs
- groundwater monitoring at 9 wells & stream sampling at 11 locations
- sampling for benthic macroinvertebrates continued in partnership with the Biology Department at the University of Windsor



16

Provincial water  
quality monitoring  
sites operated

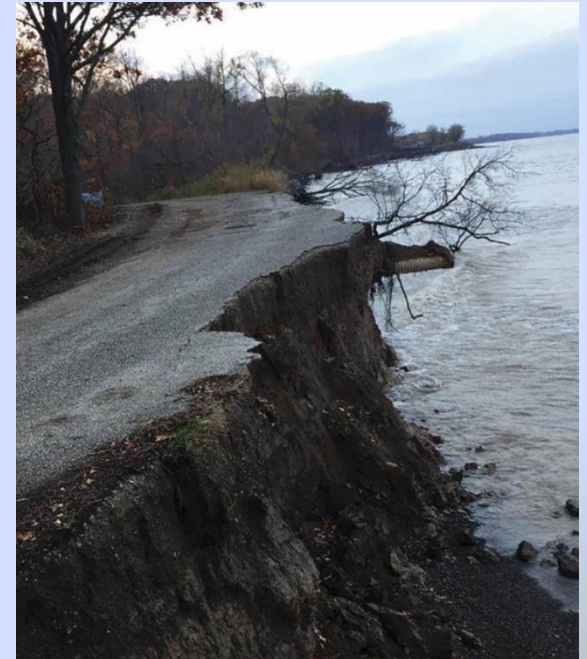




# PROTECTING LIFE & PROPERTY

## Land Use Planning & Regulations

To maintain the vitality of our watersheds & protect peoples' lives & property from flooding & erosion, Conservation Authorities administer the **Conservation Authorities Act & its regulations**.

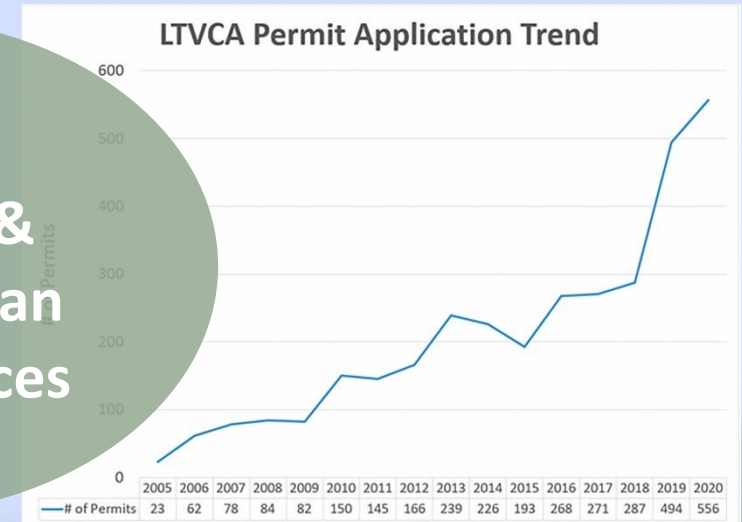
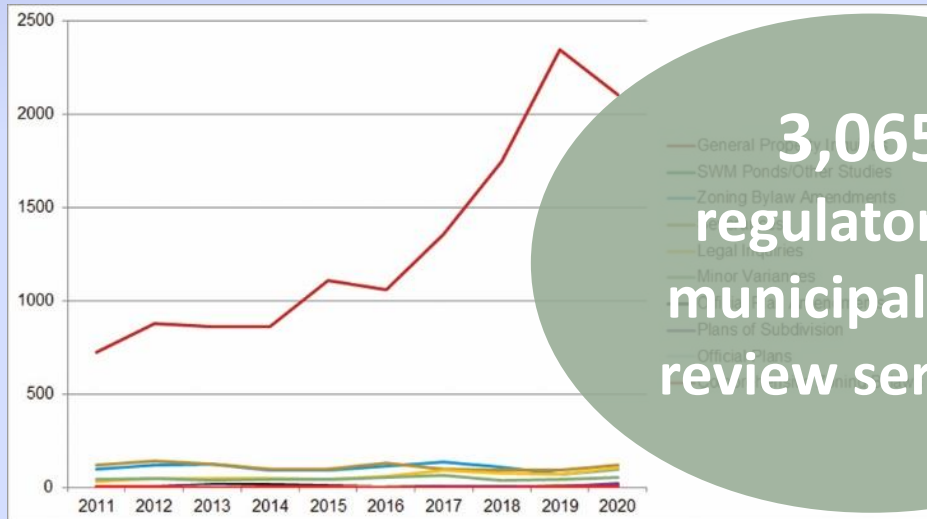


*Along L. Erie shoreline - damaging impacts of wind & lake surges, flooding of Erie Shore Drive, & unprecedented erosion.*

# PROTECTING LIFE & PROPERTY

## Land Use Planning & Regulations

- **Municipal Plan Review & the Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alteration to Shorelines & Water Courses – Ontario Regulation 162/06**
  - Staff reviewed 556 applications under this regulation
  - Regulate development in or beside river & stream valleys, lake shores, hazard lands & wetlands to maintain & protect peoples' lives & property from flooding & erosion





# PROTECTING LIFE & PROPERTY

## Land Use Planning & Regulations

- **Thames River Blue-green Algae Bloom**



The lower Thames River experienced an extensive blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) bloom, August 13 - September 3. LTVCA aided provincial staff & academic researchers by monitoring the extent of the algae bloom & collecting samples.



The purpose of the provincial Clean Water Act (CWA) 2006 is to protect existing & future sources of drinking water. Protecting water at the source – municipal wells & water intakes – is the first barrier in a multi-barrier approach to providing safe, clean supply of water.



## Highlights of the Year



- Submitted third Annual Progress Report on the implementation progress of the Source Protection Plan.
- May marked 20 years since the water tragedy in Walkerton & to commemorate, a “Trust the Tap” campaign rolled out across Ontario to communicate how much we have learned & accomplished since then, & to emphasize the importance of source protection work.

Website <https://www.sourcewaterprotection.on.ca/>

# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

The responsible care of our natural resources on a watershed basis is essential to balancing human & economic needs against the needs of our natural environment. Conservation Authorities have a long history working with landowners in the planning & delivery of watershed stewardship initiatives.

Staff provide opportunities for local projects, which protect & restore species & habitats, encourage a sense of ownership of environmental rehabilitation efforts, & protect our water resources.

### Such as...

Wardsville Species at Risk Info Night

Greening the Landscape Webinar

Ridgetown Horticulture Society & Rotary Club tree planting

Wheatley Soccer Association &

Wheatley Horticulture Society tree planting

Tilbury & Area Free Tree Giveaway



# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

ALUS Chatham-Kent

ALUS Elgin

ALUS Middlesex

Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk (CNFASAR), Fisheries & Oceans Canada

Canada Summer Jobs

Carolinian Canada Coalition

Ducks Unlimited Canada

ECO Canada

Elgin Clean Water

Elgin Stewardship Council

ENGIE

Environment & Climate Change Canada

Forest Ontario

Grasslands Ontario

Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP), Fisheries & Oceans Canada

LEADS

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, & Rural Affairs

Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association via CAP

Ridge Landfill Community Trust

Ridge Landfill Mitigation

Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative

Wildlife Habitat Canada

**23**  
stewardship  
partners

**287**  
landowners benefited  
from **\$1.186 M**  
in stewardship grants



# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

**113** hectares  
naturally restored  
across the  
watershed



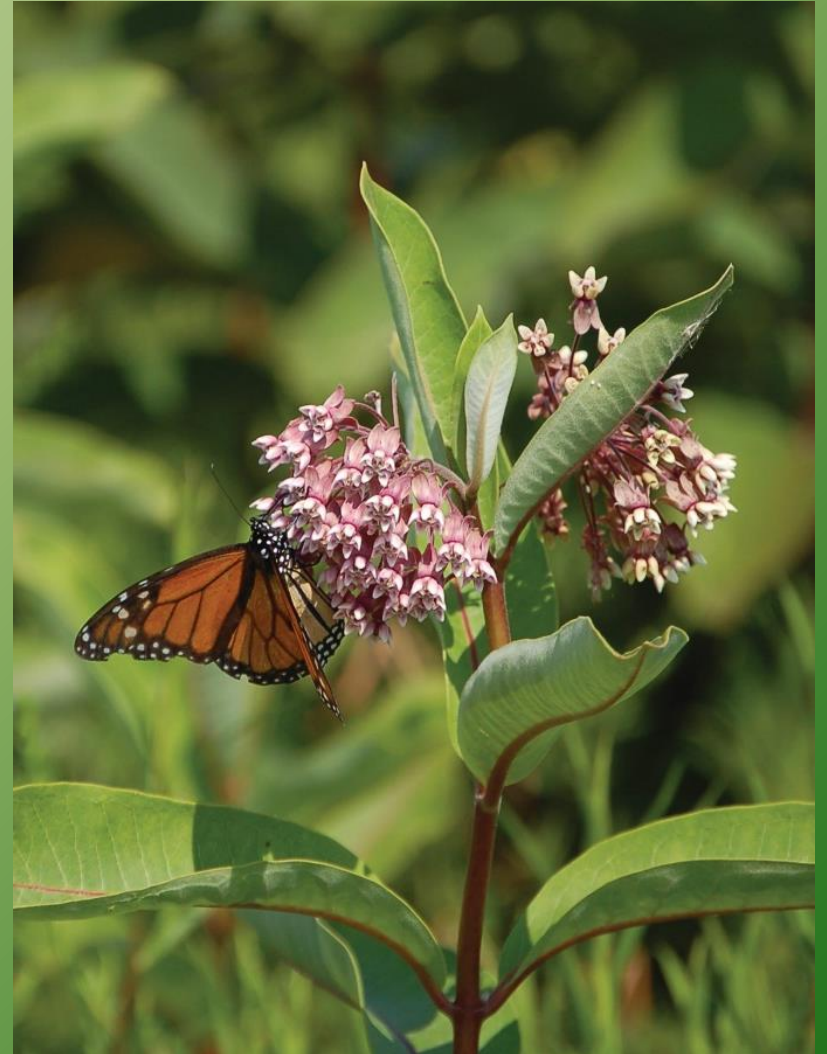


# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship



**53** hectares  
tallgrass prairie  
planted

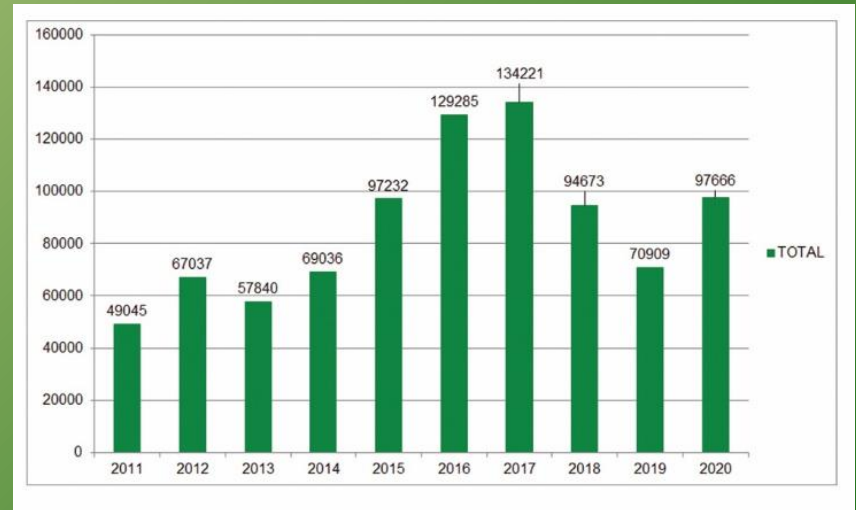


# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

**97,666**  
trees planted

**47.4**  
hectares reforested





# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

**12.6**  
hectares  
wetlands  
created



# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

- **Species at Risk (SAR)**

- 2nd year of Habitat Stewardship Program & Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk funding through Fisheries & Oceans Canada
- work continued on the Aquatic Species at Risk Threat Assessment. Subwatersheds were prioritized for potential to maximize fish & mussel SAR recovery

- report for Southwest Middlesex identified aquatic resources & their cumulative effects of salt (chloride) loading

**27 projects**  
– prairie & treed  
riparian corridors,  
wetland habitat &  
rock chutes



**7 subwatersheds  
sampled for fish & mussel  
SAR using eDNA sampler**



# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

-  **Alternative Land Use Service**

**ALUS Middlesex**

**20**

**Landowner Participants**

**36.9** hectares  
enrolled



**Trees**

**Wetlands**

**Buffer strips**

**Tallgrass prairie**

**Invasive  
species  
removal**

**ALUS Chatham-Kent**

**17**

**Landowner Participants**

**17.3** hectares  
enrolled





# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

- **McGregor & Jeannettes Creek Phosphorus Reduction Program**

- project is funded in part by the Environment & Climate Change Canada Great Lakes Protection Initiative & the Canadian Agricultural Partnership
- environmental monitoring continued

**\$85,172 to**  
**40 Agricultural producers**  
**for BMP's**



# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

- **On-Farm Applied Research & Monitoring (ONFARM) Program**



- 2020-2021, \$124,329 to support monitoring & agricultural research operations in Jeannettes Creek study subwatershed
- goal to assist agricultural sector in strengthening environmental stewardship, enhancing water quality, & improving soil health
- project is administered by the Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association, funded by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership

# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

- **Lower Thames Valley Soil Health Program**

- funded by Environment & Climate Change Canada Great Lakes Protection Initiative

- launched in 2021 & provides financial incentives to farm businesses for cover crops & grid or zone soil sampling to improve soil health & water quality

- secondary goal to enhance agricultural education & outreach activities to increase participation in LTVCA conservation services programs



**\$221,866**  
**for watershed-wide**  
**Soil Health Program**



# ENHANCING WATERSHED HEALTH

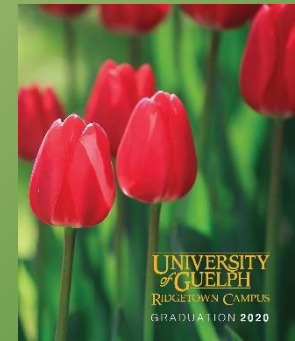
## Tree Planting, Restoration, Stewardship

- **Watershed Awards Applauding Special People & Groups**

Environmental Awards  
for Landowners &  
Organizations



Graduation Award  
Sponsorship



Volunteer Heroes  
Awards



# STEPPING INTO NATURE

## Conservation Areas – *Be Active! Be Healthy!*

- **270 Conservation Areas in Ontario!**
- Safety Committee regularly inspects our CA's
- 1 land donation totaling 1.2 hectares

**18**

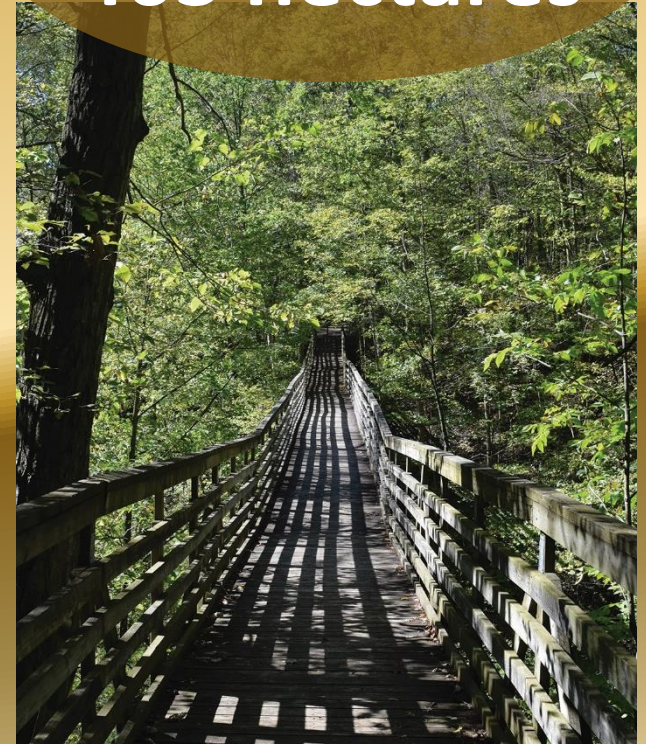
**public conservation areas**

**463 hectares**

**LTVCA**

**693 hectares**

**protected wetlands, forests,  
tallgrass prairies, lakefront &  
habitat restoration sites**





# STEPPING INTO NATURE

Conservation Areas — *Be Active! Be Healthy!*

**29,392**

*recorded*  
day use &  
campers

**654**

campers  
E M Warwick

**1,932**

day use  
Sharon Creek

**2,595**

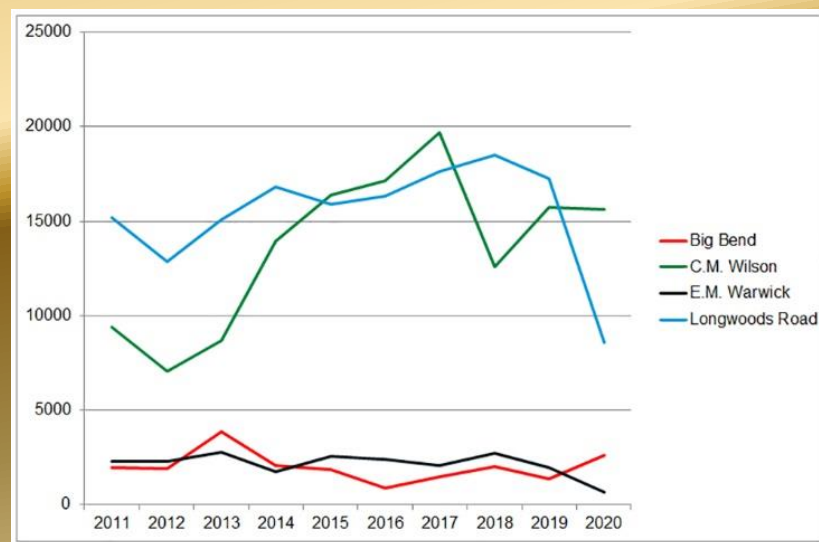
campers  
Big Bend

**8,573**

day use  
Longwoods Road

**15,638**

day use &  
campers  
C.M.  
Wilson





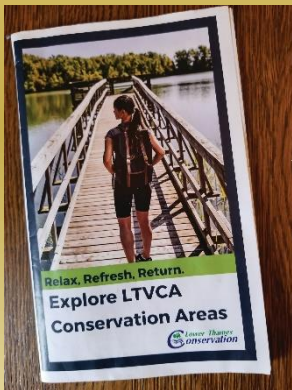
# STEPPING INTO NATURE

## Conservation Areas – *Be Active! Be Healthy!*

- **Some CA lands projects of special mention!**



Explore LTVCA Conservation  
Areas - 18 CA booklet  
271 Parking Passes Sold



Employment Programs



Land Donation at Big 'O'



Sculpture at E.M. Warwick  
by local artist



# COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH & EDUCATION

## – *Supporting All Programs*

Communications enhance awareness & understanding of the goals & programs of the LTVCA for our target audiences, enabling them to support & enjoy our facilities & services. We use social media, literature, advertising, media releases, special events, watershed tours, festivals, speaking engagements & displays to relay our messaging.



**Directors & Committee Members**  
**Member Municipal Councillors / Staff**  
**Government Agencies**  
**CA Staff**  
**Watershed residents**  
**Media**  
**CA Visitors**  
**Project partners...**



[lrvca.ca](https://lrvca.ca)



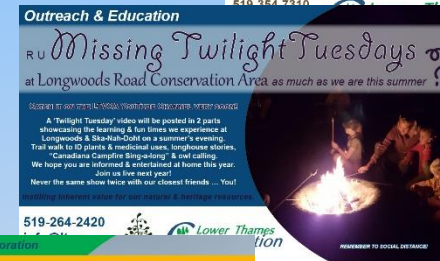
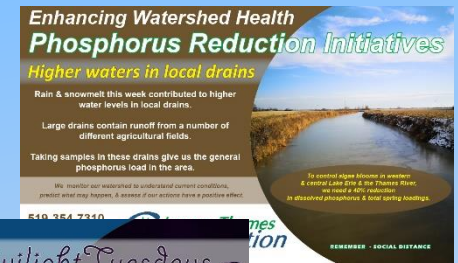
**22+**  
**Media**  
**Releases**

# COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH & EDUCATION

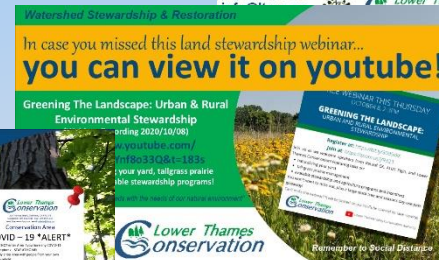
## – Supporting All Programs

- Some Highlights & Key Messaging
  - COVID-19 (March – December)
  - Repeal Schedule 6 of Bill 229 (November – December)

### Annual Report Publications & Presentations



Water quality



Outreach & education



Water management



Conservation areas

Stewardship

300+  
Department  
Social Media  
messages

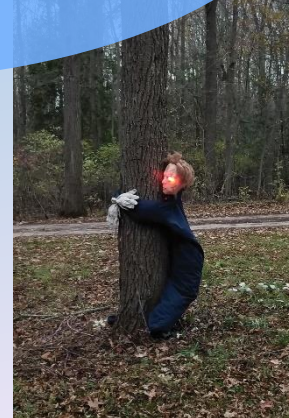


# COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH & EDUCATION

## – *Supporting All Programs*



7  
events hosted safely  
in our conservation areas  
... some pre pandemic





# STEPPING INTO NATURE

## Education Programs – Take Learning Outdoors!



- in Ontario over 410,000 students participate annually in CA outdoor education programs which meet curriculum expectations of the Ontario Ministry of Education
- 37 Interpretive Centres operated by Conservation Authorities in Ontario

**We teach children & adults about local & global environmental issues, explore linkages between humans & natural environment, & instill a greater appreciation & understanding of nature.**

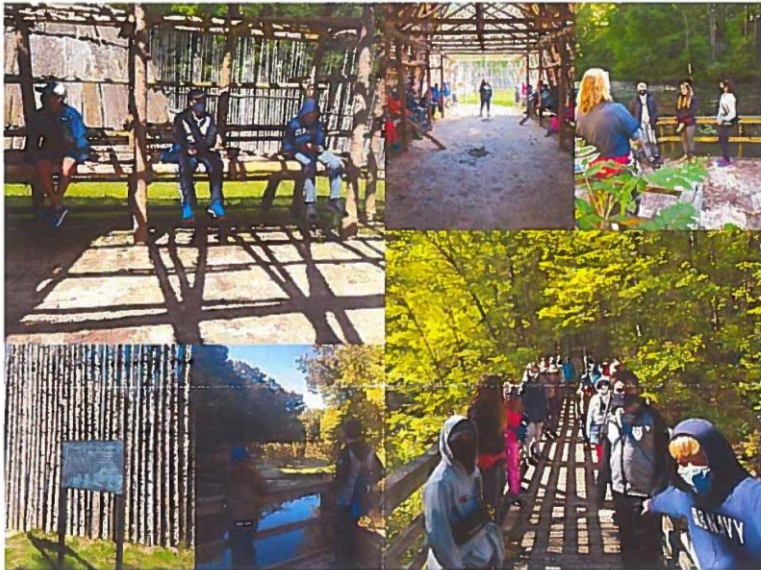
**Unique in that we reflect First Nations' approach to living within the environment & combine the Heritage & Sciences curriculum strands.**

# STEPPING INTO NATURE

## Education Programs – Take Learning Outdoors!

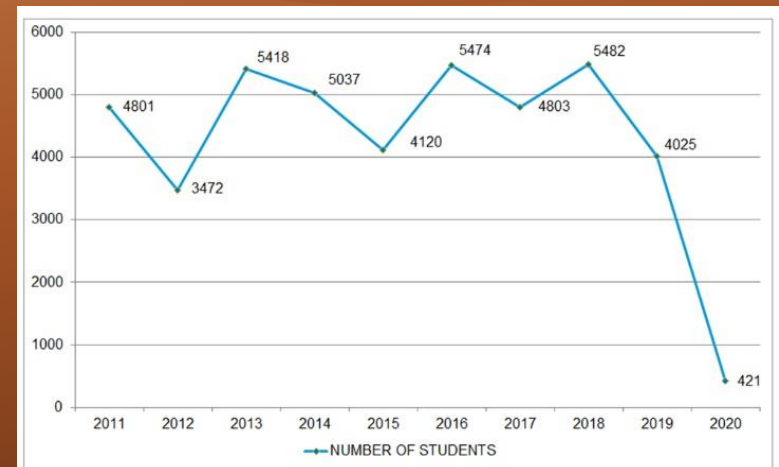
- Longwoods, C.M. Wilson, Ska-Nah-Doht Village, inclass & outreach programs
- Ontario Curriculum based education programs
- Field trip programming attendance was affected by teacher action & pandemic
- 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Chatham-Kent & Lambton Children's Water Festival was cancelled

in nature while learning. We have a longstanding relationship with Longsoods and have spent many years starting our lessons out there in the fall. We are grateful for Jerry, Karen and the staff at Longwoods conservation area for welcoming us, teaching us and sharing their land and wisdom.



# 428

children & their chaperones  
participated





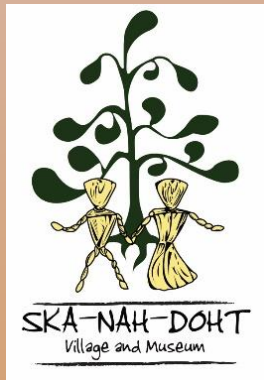
# STEPPING INTO NATURE

## Education Programs - *Conservation*

- **River & Creek Safety Program sponsored by local service clubs**
  - Watershed inclass program halted mid-stream due to pandemic after 2/3's of classes were taught



**163**  
grade 2's



# STEPPING INTO NATURE at Ska-Nah-Doht Village Longwoods Road Conservation Area

## OUR MISSION

Ska-Nah-Doht Village & Museum is an interactive museum that engages the public in the preservation & presentation of the past through experiences on-site & in the community

## OUR VISION

Ska-Nah-Doht Village & Museum continues to be a community leader, to educate about the past, collect & preserve local history, & faithfully interpret the Haudenosaunee - People of the Longhouse



# STEPPING INTO NATURE at Ska-Nah-Doht Village

- Keeping safely in touch with our audiences while adapting to current situation...

Summer Day Camp became a hugely successful  
“Camp-in-a-Bag” – curbside pickup.

Programs for corporate team building are  
researched & developed.

Education presentations are being adapted for web  
access by teachers & students.

Public in person programs re-booted to offer  
some virtual options like “Twilight Tuesday’s” on  
YouTube... despite internet challenges at Longwoods!  
And a new ‘drive-thru’ event “Hallow-scenes”!





# SKA-NAH-DOHT VILLAGE & MUSEUM

- Ska-Nah-Doht Village has welcomed tourists from over 24 countries around the world
- The Turtle Trail Gift Shop operates from the Resource Centre Museum when open
- \$22,992 from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport through the Community Museum Operating Grant; \$19,453 from the Museum Assistance Program (MAP)

**Althouse College  
Alternate Field Placement**

**Canada Summer Jobs**

**Ontario Job Creation Program**

**Oneida Job Development**





# COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH & EDUCATION



Habitat  
Restoration



CA  
Improvement



Tree  
Planting

Thanks to the  
**73**  
Dedicated volunteers who  
provided **672 hours**  
of their time for conservation in  
2020!



Fund  
Raising



CA  
Events



# COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH & EDUCATION



Applauding all the  
inspired partners that provided  
**\$1.56 M**  
to support  
watershed conservation!

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)  
ALUS Chatham-Kent  
ALUS Elgin  
ALUS Middlesex  
Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk (CNFASAR), Fisheries & Oceans  
Canada  
Canada Summer Jobs  
Caradoc Legion Branch 251 Mount Brydges  
Carolinian Canada Coalition  
Department of Canadian Heritage  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
ECO Canada  
Elgin Clean Water  
Elgin Stewardship Council  
Employment & Social Development  
ENGIE  
Environment & Climate Change Canada  
Forest Ontario  
Friends of St. Clair River  
Glencoe District Lions Club

Grasslands Ontario  
Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP), Fisheries & Oceans Canada  
LEADS  
Lions Club of Rodney  
Lower Thames Valley Conservation Foundation  
Oneida Nation - Employment & Training  
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, & Rural Affairs  
Ontario Ministry of Culture  
Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training & Skills Development  
Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association via CAP  
Pat Lavin  
Ridge Landfill Community Trust  
Ridge Landfill Mitigation  
Royal Canadian Legion Branch 598  
Service Canada  
Sunrise Rotary of Chatham-Kent  
Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative  
West Elgin Mutual Insurance, Dutton  
Wildlife Habitat Canada



# CONTACT US!

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The details are in our  
Annual Report, posted  
on our website.  
Thank You!

