

LPRCA STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018



Long Point Region Conservation Authority

Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) is a community-based environmental agency dedicated to protecting, restoring and managing the natural resources in our watershed. Through more than 60 years of conservation, we have worked in partnership with the provincial and federal governments, our eight member municipalities and the community to increase natural areas coverage, improve water quality, protect people and property from flooding and erosion and provide education and recreation opportunities.

Vision

To Build a Healthy and Resilient Watershed.

Mission

Providing services in partnership to protect, enhance and restore a healthy watershed.



Values

- We are dedicated to conservation excellence by both building on existing partnerships, as well as, forging new relationships that benefit the watershed and its constituents.
- We are committed to open communication that is clear and respectful to all.
- We will work on creative and resourceful solutions based on the best information available, ever mindful of the boundaries in which we work.
- We will conduct ourselves in a responsive and dynamic manner that reflects the four cornerstones of the organization - accessibility, transparency, integrity and accountability.



To develop and maintain programs that will protect life and property from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion.

The Issues

Flooding and erosion are two on-going problems in the Long Point Region watershed. More frequent extreme storm events combined with the removal of trees, loss of wetlands, tile-draining of land, and hardening of surfaces all contribute to greater runoff – and in turn, flooding and erosion.

The Challenges

- Climate change may alter typical precipitation patterns including larger rainstorms and faster snow melts. These events in turn could require changes in both reservoir operating procedures and the flood management program.
- Infrastructure priorities have been established, but reliable sources of funding to maintain and/or decommission aging water-control structures needs to be secured.
- Decision-making tools and polices need to be established and/or updated to reflect on-going changes and take advantage of new technologies.

Strategic Priorities

1. Complete safety plans for dams and other water-control structures.
2. Update the capital financing plan for infrastructure repairs/dam decommissioning.
3. Establish and review decision-making policies and tools.
4. Update LPRCA permitting policies, procedures and mapping – allowing for 5-year updates that incorporate environmental changes and new information.
5. Enhance flood forecasting and warning tools.



Maintain and Enhance Watershed Health.

The Issues

A key component of healthy communities is a healthy environment. While much has been done to address the environmental stressors created by deforestation throughout the watershed during the early part of the 20th century, pressures from on-going development, agricultural expansion, population growth and climate change continue to impact the local environment.

The LPRCA carries out a wide variety of programs to improve surface and groundwater quality – both quality and quantity – by protecting, restoring and managing terrestrial and aquatic habitats through policies, partnerships and acquisition.

The Challenges

- While a watershed is a natural means of managing water-related matters, responsibility for water-related issues is held by several agencies including, LPRCA, local municipalities, as well as, the federal and provincial governments.
- Development pressure is mounting along Lake Erie's shoreline, as well as, local watercourses at a time when people are also demanding improvements in water quality and quantity.
- Rising demand for land is creating pressure on terrestrial habitat, creating a wide range of implications for the local environment.

Strategic Priorities

1. Establish new partnerships that will enhance services while minimizing duplication in order to provide more cost-effective solutions to watershed constituents.
2. Continue to grow public awareness and participation in LPRCA stewardship programs in order to promote data collecting, as well as, the creation of subwatershed community action groups.
3. Work with other water management agencies to complete and implement both Source Water Protection Plans, as well as, any other strategies designed to protect, preserve, enhance and restore the natural features and functions of the watershed.
4. Expand a renewable forestry program to enhance resource management.



Link people to the environment through outdoor, education and cultural heritage experiences.

The Issues

The watershed population continues to grow and associated development is increasing the pressure on the local environment as people leave larger urban centres to enjoy the natural benefits of the LPRCA region.

Eco-tourism and the fact that the watershed is the heart of Carolinian Canada attract a wide range of visitors who add to the growing demand for outdoor recreational activities and environmental education programming. LPRCA operates five active conservation areas, an education centre, a historical village, as well as, a nationally-recognized historical grist mill.

The Challenges

- Growing demand for access to natural areas including conservation areas, woodlots and trail systems is putting stress on the ecological features of those properties, as well as, introducing harmful, non-native invasive species.
- Meeting the social, economic and environmental needs of the community and region can lead to conflicting priorities.
- There are various factors that threaten participation by schools in all-important environmental and historical programming.
- Providing recreational services in a competitive market creates an ever-increasing demand for capital improvements.

Strategic Priorities

1. Create master plans for all conservation areas that incorporate all attractions i.e. historical village, trail systems, educational programming, special events, etc.
2. Review and implement new fee schedules that recognize the enhanced value of premium camping sites and reinvest those resources to meet capital needs at parks.
3. Enhance advertising and promotions for all conservation areas in order to increase visitor numbers and experiences.
4. Enhance conservation and heritage programming to optimize customer experience.
5. Create a business plan for sustainable operation of active conservation areas as "profit centres."
6. Complete a passive lands management strategy.
7. Conduct a strategic review of the environmental and historical education programs, as well as, the historical village in order to confirm their place and importance in advancing LPRCA's mandate.



Maintain an organization committed to teamwork, positive change and excellence.

The Issues

LPRCA is often viewed by the public as an organization that operates campgrounds and plants trees – it is so much more. Staff is involved in engineering, planning, recreational, educational and land management issues to name just a few of its many activities. As such, staff must be well-trained, flexible, creative and able to work on multi-disciplinary teams committed to best meeting the goals of watershed constituents.

Recruiting and retaining key personnel for continuity of both service delivery and historical knowledge can be challenging for a smaller organization like LPRCA – especially as the watershed community continues to grow.

The Challenges

- Staff recruitment can be an issue as many of the skill sets required by LPRCA are easily transferable to the public and private sectors.
- In a generation, the majority of LPRCA's Senior Management Team will be nearing retirement. Succession planning and mentoring should be formalized to develop the next generation of experienced staffers.
- Having a decentralized workforce makes it difficult to effectively communicate with the entire organization.

Strategic Priorities

1. Create a mentoring/leadership training program.
2. Annually review and update the LPRCA Personnel and Procedures Policy in order to identify and address any gaps resulting from emerging issues.
3. Continue to utilize emerging technologies to both communicate effectively and provide appropriate training and support to staff.



Work collaboratively with watershed stakeholders to deliver high-value, efficient and innovative solutions.

The Issues

The LPRCA is built on partnerships; it would not be able to deliver its wide variety of programs without them. Municipalities along with the Province created the LPRCA in order to address local environmental issues. Those partnerships over the past six decades have expanded to include schools, provincial ministries, federal departments, community groups, environmental organizations, agricultural groups and many others.

While these partnerships are critical to LPRCA's success, nearly two-thirds of the conservation authority's revenues are self-generated – meaning that LPRCA must be ever-vigilant in seeking out and securing new business opportunities and revenues.

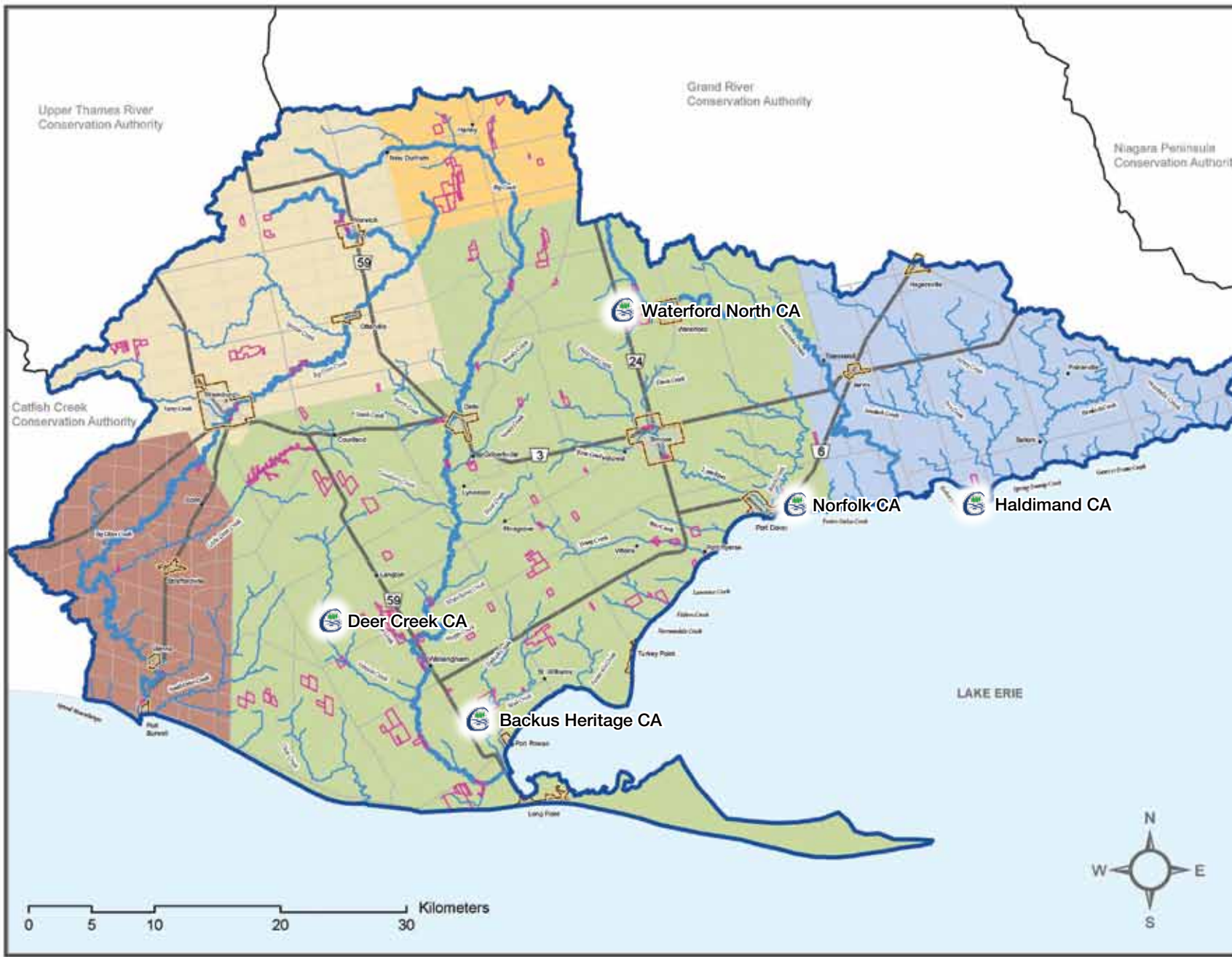
The Challenges

- Financial pressures on all levels of government can make it difficult for them to continue to invest into LPRCA to deliver all-important programs to watershed constituents.
- The LPRCA owns over 11,000 acres of land, 13 water-control structures, five active conservation areas, as well as, other assets requiring resources to maintain and upkeep.
- Watershed partners are being stretched in all-directions as grant and fundraising opportunities continue to dwindle.

Strategic Priorities

1. Continue to enhance LPRCA's relationship with watershed municipalities through direct, regular communication with municipal councils, senior staff and supporting LPRCA members in their role as liaisons with their respective municipalities.
2. Develop a surplus asset disposition plan.
3. Create more effective communication tools and opportunities to enhance awareness and understanding of the watershed's value to decision makers at all levels of government, as well as, in the community-at-large.
4. Support municipal partners to develop stronger links between their communities, the watershed and LPRCA's land-holdings.

The Long Point Region Watershed



LPRCA Watershed Map

May 2012

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The Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) assumes no responsibility for the correctness of the information contained in this map nor liability to any user of such information, regardless of the purpose.

Legend

- Watercourse
- LPRCA Properties
- LPRCA Watershed Boundary
- Brant County
- Elgin County
- Haldimand County
- Norfolk County
- Oxford County
- Urban Area



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A watershed is an area of land drained by a common stream, river or lake system. The Long Point Region watershed drains 2,782 square kilometres of land, an area roughly bounded by Norwich in the north, Long Point in the south, Hagersville to the east and Tillsonburg to the west. Six main subwatershed systems drain this land area, emptying into Lake Erie.

ABOUT LPRCA

Quick Facts

- The Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) is one of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario.
- The LPRCA was created in 1971 with the amalgamation of the former Big Creek Region (1948-1970) and Otter Creek (1954-1970) conservation authorities.
- Today, the LPRCA serves approximately 102,000 people and covers a watershed area of 2,782 square kilometres that includes the entire Municipality of Bayham, 95% of Norfolk County, 35% of Haldimand County, 22% of Oxford County, 16% of Brant County and 10% of the Township of Malahide.
- Our watershed takes in an area drained by more than 30 creeks and tributaries, with 225 kilometres of Lake Erie shoreline, including the internationally renowned Long Point sand spit.
- The watershed has been divided into six main subwatershed areas: Big Otter Creek, South Otter/Clear Creek, Big Creek, Dedrick/Young/Hay Creek, Lynn River/Black Creek and Nanticoke/Sandusk/Stoney Creek. Each subwatershed has unique features relative to their land base and land use that affect the health of the overall Long Point Region watershed.
- There are 3 major physiographic regions in the watershed: the Norfolk Sand Plain, the Haldimand Clay Play and the Horseshoe Moraine/Mount Elgin Ridges.
- The Long Point Region has amongst the highest density of Provincial Permits-to-take-Water in Southern Ontario. Most of these permits are for agricultural irrigation.
- The land area is dominated by intensive agriculture, yet forest cover has recovered to 21%. Wetlands are a significant feature of the watershed area, making up almost 9% of the land area.
- The Long Point Region watersheds fall within the Deciduous Forest Region of Canada, also known as the Carolinian Forest Zone. There are significant forest pockets that include species such as Tulip Tree, Black Gum, Sassafras, Black Oak, and Cucumber Tree. These tree species are rare in Canada and occur naturally only in southern parts of Ontario north of Lake Erie.
- There are 85 species at risk found in the Long Point Region watershed, including 14 reptiles and amphibians, 30 birds and insects, 14 fish and mollusks, 23 plants and mosses and 4 mammals.
- More than 4,000 school children participate in conservation education and heritage education programs annually at Backus Heritage Conservation Area.
- More than 100,000 tree and shrub seedlings are planted on private land each year.
- Conversion of Administration Office into Low Impact Development (LID) Demonstration Site with planting of 1,500 trees, tallgrass prairie and runoff controls.

The LPRCA carries out programs in seven business areas:

- **Improve water quality**
- **Protect natural areas and biodiversity**
- **Ensure adequate water supplies**
- **Reduce flood damages**
- **Facilitate watershed planning**
- **Provide environmental and heritage education**
- **Supply outdoor recreation opportunities**





Member of the
Conservation Ontario Network

LONG POINT REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

4 Elm Street, Tillsonburg, ON N4G 0C4
Phone: (519) 842-4242 • Toll Free: 1-888-231-5408
Fax: (519) 842-7123
Email: conservation@lprca.on.ca

www.lprca.on.ca