

**UPPER THAMES RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING**

**AGENDA**

**TUESDAY, May 25, 2021 at 9:30 A.M**  
**Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic**

**1. Approval of Agenda**

Mover: N.Manning

Second: H.McDermid

THAT the Board of Directors approve the Agenda as posted.

**2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

**3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings: Tuesday April 27, 2021**

Mover: P.Mitchell

Second: A.Murray

THAT that the UTRCA Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated April 27, 2021, including any closed session minutes, as posted on the Members' web-site.

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**5. Delegations**

**6. Business for Approval**

**6.1 Approval of Audited Financial Statements for 2020 – T.Annett/C.Saracino FIN#1177**

Mover: B.Petrie

Second: J.Reffle

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

**6.2 Update to Section 28 Permit Fee Schedule for Minister's Zoning Orders (MZO) Requests**

T.Annett/J.Allain Admin #4052

Mover: J.Salter

Second: M.Schadenberg

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

**7. Business for Information**

**7.1 Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Status Report – Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (O.Reg157/06) – J.Allain ENVP #**

Mover: A.Westman

Second: M.Blosh

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.

- 7.2 Regulatory Proposal Consultation Guide: Regulations Defining Core Mandate and Improving Governance, Oversight and Accountability of Conservation Authorities  
T.Annett Admin #4054  
Mover: A.Hopkins  
Secunder: T.Jackson  
THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.
- 7.3 Group Insurance Renewal – T.Annet/S.Viglianti HR # 24435  
Mover: S.Levin  
Secunder: N.Manning  
THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.
- 7.4 Presentation: Alternative Sources of Funding – T.Hollingsworth  
Mover: H.McDermid  
Secunder: P.Mitchell  
THAT the Board of Directors receives the presentation.
- 8. May 2021 For Your Information Report**
- 9. Other Business (Including Chair and General Manager’s Concluding Remarks)**
- 10. Closed Session – In Camera**
- 11. Adjournment**  
Mover: A.Murray



---

Tracy Annett, General Manager

c.c. Members of the Board of Directors and Staff

MINUTES  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING  
Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic  
TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2021

The UTRCA Board Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30am and introduced new board member Councillor Margaret Lupton, representing East Zorra-Tavistock and Blandford-Blenheim.

Members Present:	M.Blosh	P.Mitchell
	A.Dale – Chair	A.Murray
	A.Hopkins	B.Petrie
	T.Jackson	J.Reffle
	S.Levin	J.Salter
	M.Lupton	M.Schadenberg
	N.Manning	A.Westman
	H.McDermid	

Regrets: None

Solicitor: G.Inglis

Staff:	J.Allain	C.Saracino
	T.Annett	J.Schnaithmann
	J.Dony	A.Shivas
	C.Harrington	C.Tasker
	T.Hollingsworth	M.Viglianti – Recorder
	J.Howley	S.Viglianti

1. Approval of Agenda

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

Mover: N.Manning

Secunder: H.McDermid

THAT the Board of Directors approve the agenda as posted.

Carried.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The Chair inquired whether the members had any conflicts of interest to declare relating to the agenda. There were none.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

April 27, 2021

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

An error in the proposed motion on the agenda was noted and the assembly agreed the words Annual General Meeting were to be removed, as they were mistakenly carried over from a previous agenda.

Mover: P.Mitchell

Secunder: A.Murray

THAT the UTRCA Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated April 27, 2021, including any closed session minutes, as posted on the Members' web-site.

Carried.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Business for Approval

6.1 Approval of Audited Financial Statements for 2020

(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

Mover: B.Petrie

Secunder: J.Reffle

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

Carried.

6.2 Update to Section 28 Permit Fee Schedule for Minister's Zoning Orders (MZO) Requests  
(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

The report was introduced and board members discussed and voiced their support for the recommendation, feeling cost recovery was beneficial to all parties, and voiced concerns regarding the provisions of the new section of the act.

Concerns were raised around the potential liability of Conservation Authorities being required, by the new provisions, to issue permits for MZOs. Conservation Ontario had requested an indemnity clause from the Province for Conservation Authorities to address this issue.

It was suggested that staff undertake an exercise of tracking the costs of planning and regulations permits.

Mover: J.Salter

Secunder: M.Schadenberg

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

Carried.

7. Business for Information

7.1 Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Status Report – Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (O.Reg157/06)  
(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

Mover: A.Westman

Secunder: M.Blosh

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.

Carried.

7.2 Regulatory Proposal Consultation Guide: Regulations Defining Core Mandate and Improving Governance, Oversight and Accountability of Conservation Authorities  
(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

Staff introduced the report and noted Conservation Ontario would be creating a template for providing comments.

Board members raise concerns regarding the anticipated administrative burden and cost of the municipal consultation process and subsequent agreement negotiations.

Questions around whether the municipal consultation and subsequent agreement negotiations would happen at the upper or lower tier level for Oxford County municipalities were raised. Staff confirmed they were seeking clarity on this matter through Conservation Ontario. A board member suggested that the members representing the County of Oxford present resolutions to their councils requesting the County of Oxford negotiate on behalf of the lower tier Municipalities.

Staff confirmed board members will be kept up to date as regulations are received through emails and board reports.

Mover: A.Hopkins

Secunder: T.Jackson

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.

Carried.

7.3 Group Insurance Renewal  
(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

It was noted that staff had begun to organize the salary review. It was anticipated the salary review would be completed by the end of 2021.

Mover: S.Levin

Secunder: N.Manning

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report as presented.

Carried.

7.4 Alternative Sources of Funding Presentation  
(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

T.Hollingsworth provided a presentation outlining the many alternative sources of funding utilized by the UTRCA.

Mover: H.McDermid

Secunder: P.Mitchell

THAT the Board of Directors receives the presentation.

Carried.

8. May 2021 For Your Information Report

The May FYI was presented for the member's information.

The board requested an email update from staff regarding the June 10<sup>th</sup> controlled drainage demo day considering the Provincial requirements for outdoor gatherings.

Staff confirmed the UTRCA had not undertaken any aerial spraying for gypsy moths on UTRCA owned lands, but would follow up with the board members concerning a question on spraying that may have occurred on lands adjacent to UTRCA owned land.

9. Other Business (Including Chair and General Manager's Concluding Remarks)

There was no other business to discuss.

10. Closed Session – In Camera

There were no items dealt with in closed session.

11. Adjournment

The Chair confirmed the mover was willing to let their name stand. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:21 am on a motion by A.Murray.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tracy Annett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

---

Tracy Annett  
General Manager  
Att.



---

**To:** UTRCA Board of Directors  
**From:** Tracy Annett  
**Date:** 17 May 2021  
**Subject:** 2020 Audited Financial Statements

**Agenda #:** 6.1  
**Filename:** ::ODMA\GRPWISE\UT\_MAIN.UTRCA\_PO.Finances:1177.1

---

**Recommendation: That the Board accepts and approves the Audited Financial Statements for 2020 prepared by MNP LLP as attached.**

The Finance & Audit Committee met with Chris Dowding and Ashley Didone, partners from MNP, on April 27th to review the 2020 Draft Audited Financial Statements and the audit findings report. Discussion centered on:

1. The in-year adjustments to assets totaling \$197,765 which completes a three year review of all assets we depreciate according to our policy for capitalization,
2. Note disclosure for impacts of COVID-19 at year end 2020,
3. Review of the three recommendations around integrating forestry billings with our main UTRCA invoicing system, cash handling/revenue recognition at the parks, and a recommendation to upgrade our software for asset tracking,
4. A new auditing standard requiring increased focus on complex accounting estimates and related disclosures. For UTRCA, our capitalization policy already supports that increased attention, though we will need to dedicate more time to asset review each year.

There were no misstatements found over the course of the audit and no other reportable matters identified. The auditors also had an opportunity to discuss matters with the committee without staff present.

Section 38 of the CA Act specifies requirements with respect to audits. Within the audited statements themselves, our auditor confirms that they are independent of the Authority and that the statements are prepared according to generally accepted accounting standards for public sector organizations. We shall continue to follow our regular practice of posting the statements on our website so that they are publicly available and of sending them to the province and to CRA with the filing of our charity return by the end of June. In addition we'll make it known to member municipalities that the statements are available once the board has accepted them. Finally, we intend to add Section 38 requirements to the annual compliance certificate offered to the board each January.

Recommended by:  
Tracy Annett  
General Manager

Prepared by:  
Christine Saracino  
Supervisor, Finance & Accounting

---

# Financial statements of Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

December 31, 2020

---

DRAFT

---

Independent Auditor's Report	1–2
Statement of operations and accumulated net revenue	3
Statement of financial position	4
Statement of change in net financial assets	5
Statement of cash flows	6
Notes to financial statements	7–11
Schedule A – Service cost centres	12
Schedule B – Reserves and reserve funds	13

---



MNP LLP  
495 Richmond  
Street, Suite 700  
London, ON N6A 5A9  
Canada

Tel: 519-679-8550  
Fax: 519-679-1812  
[www.mnp.ca](http://www.mnp.ca)

# Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of  
Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

## Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (the "Authority"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2020, the statements of operations and accumulated net revenue, change in net financial assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, including schedules.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority as at December 31, 2020, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

## Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Authority or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

## Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*MNP LLP*

Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

April 27, 2021  
London, Ontario

**Upper Thames River Conservation Authority**  
**Statement of operations and accumulated net revenue**  
**Year ended December 31, 2020**

			2019 Actual \$
<b>Revenue</b>	Schedule		
Municipal general levy			3,561,202
Dam and flood control levy			4,349,957
Conservation areas			3,638,044
Land and asset management			1,117,794
Fees for service		<b>1,259,005</b>	<b>1,215,694</b>
Provincial transfer payments			
Ministry of Natural Resources			181,213
Section 39 grants			
Other provincial grants			2,930,380
Donations			41,276
Federal program funding			3,926,595
Other revenues			617,660
		<b>19,540,856</b>	<b>22,772,475</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Recreation		<b>3,749,340</b>	<b>3,650,722</b>
			4,299,438
Flood control centre		<b>9,579,483</b>	<b>8,092,352</b>
			10,241,655
Lands and facilities management		<b>926,902</b>	<b>881,946</b>
			788,766
Watershed research, planning and monitoring		<b>1,109,841</b>	<b>974,359</b>
			807,248
Community partnership program		<b>1,308,089</b>	<b>1,090,885</b>
			1,279,628
Source water protection		<b>534,606</b>	<b>544,427</b>
			599,461
Environmental planning & regulations		<b>1,574,290</b>	<b>1,445,799</b>
			1,333,060
Soil and forestry programs		<b>1,971,072</b>	<b>1,487,460</b>
			1,436,863
Environmental significant areas		<b>597,489</b>	<b>601,229</b>
			638,311
Service cost centres	A	<b>163,295</b>	<b>143,086</b>
			437,534
		<b>21,514,407</b>	<b>18,913,265</b>
			21,861,964
		<b>67,738</b>	<b>627,591</b>
			910,511
<b>Annual surplus</b>			
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year		<b>44,443,115</b>	<b>44,443,115</b>
			43,532,604
		<b>44,510,852</b>	<b>45,070,706</b>
			44,443,115

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

**Upper Thames River Conservation Authority****Statement of financial position**

As at December 31, 2020

	Notes	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>Financial assets</b>			
Cash		2,692,505	1,848,192
Restricted cash	3	—	100,291
Accounts receivable		2,950,538	5,084,976
Investments	4	9,320,440	7,231,105
		<b>14,963,484</b>	14,264,564
<b>Financial liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable		1,028,542	2,411,173
Accrued liabilities		455,871	538,919
Deferred revenue		6,560,738	6,397,439
Government payable		632,224	-
Other liabilities	5	—	100,291
		<b>8,677,375</b>	9,447,822
Net financial assets			
<b>Non-financial assets</b>			
Tangible capital assets	6	38,660,703	39,491,860
Prepaid expenses and deposits Inventories		95,957	108,229
		<b>27,938</b>	26,284
<b>Accumulated surplus</b>			
<b>Non-financial assets</b>			
	7	<b>45,070,706</b>	44,443,115

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Approved by the Board

\_\_\_\_\_, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_, General manager

\_\_\_\_\_, Supervisor of Finance

**Upper Thames River Conservation Authority**  
**Statement of change in net financial assets**  
Year ended December 31, 2020

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
<b>Annual surplus</b>	<b>627,591</b>	910,511
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	<b>(329,874)</b>	(1,912,659)
Revenue from amounts recorded as construction in progress	—	3,655,585
Amortization of tangible capital assets	<b>1,160,732</b>	1,151,730
Gain on sale of tangible capital assets	<b>(4,751)</b>	(58,252)
Proceeds on sale of tangible capital assets	<b>5,051</b>	58,474
Change in inventories	<b>(1,654)</b>	(2,660)
Change in prepaid expenses and deposits	<b>12,272</b>	(23,934)
Change in net financial assets	<b>1,469,367</b>	3,778,795
Net financial assets, beginning of the year	<b>4,816,742</b>	1,037,947
<b>Net financial assets, end of the year</b>	<b>6,286,109</b>	4,816,742

Notes

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

DRAFT



**Upper Thames River Conservation  
Authority**  
**Statement of cash flows**  
Year ended December 31, 2020

	Notes	\$	2019 \$
<b>Operating activities</b>			
Annual surplus			910,511
Adjustment for			
Amortization of tangible capital assets			1,151,730
Changes in non-cash operating working capital			
Accounts receivable			(1,815,718)
Prepaid expenses and deposits			(23,934)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities			116,735
Inventories			(2,660)
Deferred revenues			1,871,849
Other liabilities			41,089
			<b>2,249,602</b>
<b>Financing activity</b>			
Restricted cash			12,260
Government funding			—
		<b>732,515</b>	<b>12,260</b>
<b>Capital activities</b>			
Gain on sale of tangible capital assets			(58,252)
Proceeds on sale of tangible capital assets			58,474
Acquisition of tangible capital assets			(1,912,659)
		<b>(329,574)</b>	<b>(1,912,437)</b>
<b>Investing activity</b>			
Change in investments, net			(635,607)
		<b>(2,089,335)</b>	<b>(635,607)</b>
Increase (decrease) in cash		<b>844,314</b>	<b>(286,182)</b>
Cash, beginning of year		<b>1,848,192</b>	2,134,374
<b>Cash, end of year</b>		<b>2,692,506</b>	1,848,192

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

# Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

## Notes to the financial statements

December 31, 2020

---

### 1. Description of the business

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (the "Authority") is established under the Conservation Authority Act of Ontario to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources, other than gas, oil, coal and minerals for the watersheds within its area of jurisdiction.

### 2. Significant accounting policies

The financial statements of the Authority are representations of management prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants Canada. Significant aspects of the accounting policies adopted by the Authority are as follows:

#### *Reserves*

Appropriations are made to reserves for future expenditures and contingencies for such amounts as required by various cost sharing arrangements, provincial restrictions and are deemed appropriate, and upon approval of the Board of Directors.

#### *Government transfers*

Government transfer payments are recognized as revenue in the financial statements in the year in which the payment is authorized and the events giving rise to the transfer occur, performance criteria are met, and a reasonable estimate of the amount can be made. Funding that is stipulated to be used for specific purposes is only recognized as revenue in the fiscal year that the related expenses are incurred or services performed. If funding is received for which the related expenses have not yet been incurred or services performed, these amounts are recorded as a liability at year end. To the extent that stipulations by the transferor give rise to an obligation that meet the definition of a liability, government transfers are recognized as revenue as the liability is extinguished.

#### *Deferred revenue*

Certain grants are received for which the related services have yet to be performed or were used in the construction of capital assets. These amounts are recognized as revenue in the fiscal year the related expenditures are incurred or over the course of the useful life of the asset constructed.

#### *Tangible capital assets*

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost which includes amounts that are directly attributable to acquisition, construction, development or betterment of the asset. The cost, less residual value, of the tangible capital assets, excluding land are amortized on a straight - line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows:

	Useful life, years
Land improvements	10-30
Buildings	15-50
Infrastructure	15-50
Furniture and fixtures	5-10
Vehicles	5-15
Flood control structures	20-80
Information Technology Equipment	3-20

# Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

## Notes to the financial statements

December 31, 2020

---

### 2. Significant accounting policies (continued)

#### *Tangible capital assets (continued)*

Amortization is charged in the year of acquisition and in the year of disposal. Construction in progress is not amortized until the asset is available for productive use.

#### (i) *Contributions of tangible capital assets*

Tangible capital assets received as contributions are recorded at their fair value at the date of receipt and also are recorded as revenue.

#### (ii) *Natural resources*

Natural resources that have not been purchased are not recognized as assets in the financial statements.

#### *Contaminated sites*

Under PS 3260, contaminated sites are defined as the result of contamination being introduced in air, soil, water or sediment of a chemical, organic, or radioactive material or live organism that exceeds an environmental standard. This standard relates to sites that are not in productive use and sites in productive use where an unexpected event resulted in contamination.

#### *Use of estimates*

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the year. Key components of the financial statements requiring management to make estimates include the amortization rates for tangible capital assets and the establishment of certain accruals. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

#### *Investments*

Investments are recorded at cost unless there is a reduction in market value that is determined to be other than temporary, at which time they would be written down to market.

### 3. Restricted cash

Restricted cash consists of funding received from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks that has been restricted in its use by the funding Agency for source water protection.

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Source water protection trust	-	100,291

## Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

### Notes to the financial statements

December 31, 2020

---

#### 4. Investments

Investments are comprised of the following:

	2020 \$	2020 Market value \$	2019 \$	2019 Market value \$
Fixed income	3,626,333	3,626,333	3,005,040	3,005,040
Equity investments	5,694,107	6,417,392	4,226,065	4,427,089
	<b>9,320,440</b>	<b>10,043,725</b>	<b>7,231,105</b>	<b>7,432,129</b>

Fixed income investments consist of term deposits and guaranteed investment certificates with maturities ranging from March 2, 2021 to January 29, 2024. Interest rates on the investments range from 0.63% to 2.45%. Fixed income and equity investments are recorded on the Statement of financial position at cost.

#### 5. Other liabilities

The Authority is the lead Agency in the source water protection fund, whereby funds are received by the Authority for the other parties to the arrangement. Each party is entitled to its pro-rata share of funding which is for the purpose of source water protection.

Funds received by the Authority for the other parties to the arrangement which have not been dispersed at December 31, 2020 amount to Nil (\$100,291 in 2019). These amounts have been included in restricted cash.

## Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

### Notes to the financial statements

December 31, 2020

#### 6. Tangible capital assets

The historical cost of tangible capital assets employed by the Authority at December 31 is as follows:

	Land	Land improvements	Buildings	Infrastructure	Furniture and fixtures	Vehicles	Flood control structures	Computers and communication	Construction in progress	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Cost</b>										
Balance 2019	15,088,900	1,105,214	14,803,275	7,700,801	760,102	2,025,065	21,924,384	819,685	22,859	64,250,285
Additions	—	—	—	—	—	58,116	34,677	9,983	30,333	133,109
Reclassifications and adjustments	—	414,500	614,000	—	—	—	451,854	—	—	1,480,354
Disposals	298	—	—	—	—	21,176	—	215,814	—	237,288
Balance 2020	<b>15,088,602</b>	<b>1,519,714</b>	<b>15,417,275</b>	<b>7,700,801</b>	<b>760,102</b>	<b>2,062,005</b>	<b>22,410,915</b>	<b>613,854</b>	<b>53,192</b>	<b>65,626,460</b>
<b>Amortization</b>										
Balance 2019	—	699,908	4,064,285	6,879,542	509,068	1,310,182	10,600,135	695,305	—	24,758,425
Additions	—	39,174	282,333	24,313	68,925	114,646	578,730	52,612	—	1,160,733
Reclassifications and adjustments	—	414,500	614,000	—	—	—	255,089	—	—	1,283,589
Disposals	—	—	—	—	—	21,176	—	215,814	—	236,990
Balance 2020	<b>—</b>	<b>1,153,582</b>	<b>4,960,618</b>	<b>6,903,855</b>	<b>577,993</b>	<b>1,403,652</b>	<b>11,433,954</b>	<b>532,103</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>26,965,757</b>
<b>Net book value</b>										
Balance 2019	15,088,900	405,306	10,738,990	821,259	251,034	714,883	11,324,249	124,380	22,859	39,491,860
Balance 2020	<b>15,088,602</b>	<b>366,132</b>	<b>10,456,657</b>	<b>796,946</b>	<b>182,109</b>	<b>658,353</b>	<b>10,976,961</b>	<b>81,751</b>	<b>53,192</b>	<b>38,660,703</b>

## Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

### Notes to the financial statements

December 31, 2020

---

#### 7. Accumulated surplus

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Surplus		
Invested in tangible assets	38,660,701	39,491,862
Unrestricted net assets	(750,357)	(1,691,709)
Total surplus	37,910,344	37,800,153
Reserve set aside for specific purposes of the Authority		
Operating and/or capital reserves (Schedule B)	3,509,225	3,237,955
Reserve funds set aside for specific purposes by the Authority		
Restricted reserves (Schedule B)	3,651,137	3,606,031
	<b>45,070,706</b>	<b>44,644,139</b>

#### 8. Pension agreements

The Authority makes contributions to the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System ("OMERS"), which is a multi-employer plan, on behalf of certain members of its staff. The plan is a defined benefit plan that specifies the amount of the retirement benefit to be received by the employees based on the length of service and rates of pay.

Contributions made by the Authority to OMERS for 2020 were \$1,268,494 (\$1,303,791 in 2019). As at December 31, 2020 the OMERS plan is 97% funded (97% in 2019). This deficit will be addressed through temporary contribution rate increases, benefit reductions and investment returns.

#### 9. Contingencies

There are certain claims pending against the Authority as at December 31, 2020. The final outcome of these claims cannot be determined at this time. In management's opinion, insurance coverage is sufficient to offset the costs of unfavorable settlements, if any, which may result from such claims.

#### 10. COVID-19 Impact

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the outbreak of a strain of the novel coronavirus ("COVID-19") as a pandemic which has resulted in a series of public health and emergency measures that have been put in place to combat the spread of the virus. The duration and impact of COVID-19 is unknown at this time and it is not possible to reliably estimate the impact that the length and severity of these developments will have on the financial results and condition of the Authority in future periods.

**Upper Thames River Conservation Authority****Schedule A – Service cost centres**

Year ended December 31, 2020

	<b>2020 Budget \$</b>	<b>2020 Actual \$</b>	2019 Actual \$
<b>Recoveries from mission cost centres</b>	<b>3,771,346</b>	<b>3,210,223</b>	3,086,260
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Occupancy	546,136	495,612	543,449
Information systems	754,571	662,324	722,227
Administration	735,842	670,456	645,974
Finance	762,139	631,044	640,821
Marketing and communications	504,628	356,357	383,157
Vehicles and equipment	631,325	537,516	588,166
	<b>3,934,641</b>	<b>3,353,309</b>	3,523,794
<b>Deficit in service cost centre</b>	<b>(163,295)</b>	<b>(143,086)</b>	(437,534)

DRAFT

**Upper Thames River Conservation Authority**

**Schedule B – Reserves and reserve funds**

Year ended December 31, 2020

	2019 \$	Appropriations to (from) reserves \$	2020 \$
<b>Restricted reserves</b>			
Flood control	3,461,872	52,004	<b>3,513,876</b>
Donor designated memorial forests	30,988	2,559	<b>33,547</b>
Harrington Grist Mill	47,194	(9,457)	<b>37,737</b>
Land disposition/acquisition reserve	65,977	—	<b>65,977</b>
	<b>3,606,031</b>	<b>45,106</b>	<b>3,651,137</b>
<b>Operating and/or capital reserves</b>			
Capital building, fleet and equipment replacement	671,493	80,000	<b>751,493</b>
General operating reserves	221,278	34,678	<b>255,956</b>
Defined purpose reserves	2,345,184	156,592	<b>2,501,776</b>
	<b>3,237,955</b>	<b>271,270</b>	<b>3,509,225</b>
	<b>6,843,986</b>	<b>316,376</b>	<b>7,160,362</b>

DRAFT



---

**To:** UTRCA Board of Directors  
**From:** Tracy Annett  
**Date:** May 17, 2021  
**Subject:** Update to Section 28 Permit Fee Schedule for MZO requests

**Agenda #:** 6.2  
**Filename:** ::ODMA\GRPWISE\UT\_MAIN.UTRCA\_PO.Administration:4052.1

---

## RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended to undertake a housekeeping amendment to the UTRCA's Section 28 Permit Fee Schedule to include Mandatory Permits, zoning orders under Section 28.1.2 of the Conservation Authorities Act. The Fee schedule amended shall include the new category; Permit Associated with MZO, 100% surcharge of the permit fee (cost recovery). In addition, the notes for all permits will be updated to include legal review as a fee to be paid by the applicant.

## SUMMARY

To update and inform the Board of Directors on the in-force amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act related to permits associated with a development project that has been authorized by a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) under the Planning Act. MZO's will require an expedited permit process, in order to review technical submissions and develop agreements to implement the conditions of these permit types, additional peer review and legal advice may be required. It is recommended that the cost of these added reviews be borne by the proponent. Amendments to the Section 28 fee schedule are recommended.

## DISCUSSION

As previously reported to the Board in January 2021, Schedule 6 of Bill 229 received Royal Assent on December 8, 2020 amended Conservation Authorities Act. Specifically, Section 28.0.1 is now in-force and applies to a development project that has been authorized by an MZO under the Planning Act, within an area regulated under Section 28(1) of the CA Act, outside of the Greenbelt Area. In UTRCA's case, the regulated area is prescribed in Ontario Regulation 157/06. It is mandatory for the Conservation Authority to issue permits related to Minister's Zoning Order. The provisions of this new section of the Act are summarized as follows:

- a. CAs shall issue a permit.
- b. CAs may only impose conditions to the permit, including conditions to mitigate where:
  - any effects the development project is likely to have on the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or pollution or the conservation of land;
  - any conditions or circumstances created by the development project that, in the event of a natural hazard, might jeopardize the health or safety of persons or result in the damage or destruction of property; or
  - any other matters that may be prescribed by regulation.
- i. An applicant has the right to a Hearing before the authority (Hearing Committee) if there is an objection to the permit conditions being imposed by the CA.

- ii. If the applicant still objects to conditions following a decision of the Hearing, the applicant has the option to either request a Minister's review (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) or appeal to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT).
- iii. All MZO-related CA permits must have an agreement with the permittee (can include other parties, e.g., municipalities, on consent of applicant).
- iv. The agreement shall set out actions that the holder of the permission must complete or satisfy in order to compensate for ecological impacts, (where applicable), and any other impacts that may result from the development project.
- v. The agreement must be executed before work commences on the site; some enforcement provisions through court proceedings are in effect for MZO permits.

It should also be noted that Conservation Ontario Council has written to the province requesting *“to amend the CA Act and/ or regulations to add a clause of indemnification for the good faith operation of essential flood and erosion control infrastructure and programming and/or issue indemnities under the appropriate Acts and regulations to conservation authorities that are compelled to issue permits due to the new provisions of CA Act and associated Planning Act Minister Zoning Order decisions”*. At this time a response has not been received.

In addition to the above, Conservation Ontario Council requested that MNRF provide a technical briefing to CA staff on the legislative changes affecting Section 28 of the CA Act to better understand the new requirements and implementation. In March, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) were to provide a technical webinar on the recent amendments for conservation authority regulatory staff. However, the session was cancelled. Recognizing the need for staff training, CO organized a session where both the Toronto Region and Lake Simcoe Regions CA's presented their experiences with Section 28 permitting as a result of a MZO. As Section 28.0.1 introduces new criteria and processes for permits associated with MZOs, staff have been advised through this training to prepare policies to ensure permit fees collected cover the additional costs associated with peer reviews of technical submissions, and legal advice and preparation of agreements.

MZOs approved on a site-by-site basis, outside the normal development approvals framework under the Planning Act, limit opportunities to effectively protect, avoid and mitigate impacts to natural heritage features, flooding, erosion and to determine the type and location of stormwater controls. These are matters typically addressed through a comprehensive review and analysis process (e.g., Environmental Impact Studies, Stormwater Management reports, Hydrology/Hydraulic analysis, Hydrogeological analysis). The UTRCA will proactively communicate our technical and policy concerns, if an MZO request is known, to municipal and provincial officials and the applicant, which is particularly critical given the recent amendments to the CA Act.

## **CONCLUSION**

The UTRCA's current fee schedule is posted on our website at: [Section 28 Fee Schedule](#). Given their nature, MZO permits are expected to be highly complex projects and involve works proposed where restoration/remediation measures are necessary. The projects will require multiple technical reviews with various disciplines, and are unlikely to comply with the UTRCA policies and/or the professional opinion of staff. As such, permits related to MZO's require significant staff involvement and will require additional legal review to negotiate agreements as required by this application type. Consistent with fee schedule revisions from LSRCA and TRCA, the UTRCA will apply a 100% surcharge of the permit fee for MZO Section 28 permits. As with all application types, the

UTRCA reserves the right to charge technical report review fees over and above the permit fees for projects where additional peer review and involvement with agreements requiring review by legal counsel is needed.

**PREPARED & RECOMMENDED BY:**

Tracy Annett, MCIP, RPP,  
General Manager / Secretary Treasurer

Jenna Allain,  
Manager, Environmental Planning & Regulations

---

**To:** UTRCA Board of Directors  
**From:** Jenna Allain, Manager – Environmental Planning and Regulations  
**Date:** May 17, 2021 **Agenda #:** 7.1  
**Subject:** Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Status Report – *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (O.Reg157/06)*

---

**Section 28 Report:**

The attached tables are provided to the Board as a summary of staff activity related to the Conservation Authority’s *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation* (Ontario Regulation 157/06 made pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act). The summary covers reports for April 1, 2021 to April 30, 2021.

**Recommended by:**

Jenna Allain  
Manager  
Environmental Planning and Regulations

**Prepared by:**

Cari Ramsey  
Environmental Regulations Technician

Jessica Schnaithmann  
Land Use Regulations Officer

Brent Verscheure  
Land Use Regulations Officer

Karen Winfield  
Land Use Regulations Officer

## SECTION 28 STATUS REPORT SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS FOR 2021

DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINE AND WATERCOURSES REGULATION  
ONTARIO REGULATION 157/06

Report Date: May 2021

[Client Service Standards for Conservation Authority Plan and Permit Review \(CO, Dec 2019\)](#)

Permit #	Municipality	Location/Address	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Required By	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
45-21	Ingersoll	334 Oxford Street	Major	Development	Proposed Construction of New Single Family Residence and Installation of New Driveway	14-Mar-2021	14-Mar-2021	11-Apr-2021	7-Apr-2021	YES	Winfield
41-21	Perth South	Road 125 between Line 29 and Line 26	Routine	Utility Corridor	Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline Installation Undercrossing Avon River	18-Jan-2021	23-Mar-2021	6-Apr-2021	9-Apr-2021	NO	Schnaithmann
42-21	West Perth	East Side of Road 160 between Highway 8 and Frank Street	Routine	Utility Corridor	Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline Installation Undercrossing Whirl Creek	19-Jan-2021	23-Mar-2021	6-Apr-2021	9-Apr-2021	NO	Schnaithmann
43-21	Perth South	1179 Perth Road 139	Minor	Development	Proposed Overhand Addition and Recladding of Existing Barn and Removal of Second Existing Barn	12-Mar-2021	23-Mar-2021	13-Apr-2021	9-Apr-2021	YES	Schnaithmann
51-21	London	Victoria Bridge, Ridout Street South	Minor	Utility Corridor	Proposed Temporary Bell Relocation Works	19-Mar-2021	25-Mar-2021	15-Apr-2021	13-Apr-2021	YES	Verscheure
48-21	London	4590 Avenue Road	Minor	Development	Proposed Construction of a Single Family Residence, Well and Septic System	5-Apr-2021	12-Apr-2021	3-May-2021	14-Apr-2021	YES	Verscheure

Permit #	Municipality	Location/Address	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Required By	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
52-21	London	391 South Street	Major	Development	Proposed Twin Towers adjacent to Thames River	14-Apr-2021	14-Apr-2021	12-May-2021	14-Apr-2021	YES	Verscheure
39-21	West Perth	5458 Line 34	Major	Development	Proposed Construction of a Warehouse Addition	16-Mar-2021	24-Mar-2021	21-Apr-2021	14-Apr-2021	YES	Schnaithmann
44-21	Thames Centre	45 Dale Drive	Major	Development	Proposed Construction of New Shed and Installation of In-Ground Pool.	11-Mar-2021	29-Mar-2021	26-Apr-2021	18-Apr-2021	YES	Winfield
40-21	London	94 Scotchmere Crescent	Routine	Development	Proposed Above-Ground Pool Installation and Deck Reconstruction	21-Mar-2021	9-Apr-2021	23-Apr-2021	20-Apr-2021	YES	Schnaithmann
47-21	London	1180 St. Anthony Road	Routine	Development	Proposed Replacement of Existing Patio	29-Mar-2021	31-Mar-2021	14-Apr-2021	20-Apr-2021	NO	Schnaithmann
55-21	Middlesex Centre	Part Lot 22, Concession 9	Major	Development	Proposed Lake Huron Primary Water Supply System Maintanance Access Watercrossing over Flood Creek.	21-Jan-2021	25-Mar-2021	22-Apr-2021	20-Apr-2021	YES	Winfield
57-21		Township of Dawn-Euphemia Municipality of Southwest Middlesex, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc, Municipality of Middlesex Centre	Major	Utility Corridor	Proposed Enbridge "London Lines" Pipeline Installation/Replacement Project	5-Mar-2021	5-Mar-2021	2-Apr-2021	21-Apr-2021	NO	Winfield
33-21	Stratford	341 Erie Street	Routine	Utility Corridor	Proposed Installation of a Conduit Undercrossing Waldie Drain	4-Mar-2021	12-Apr-2021	26-Apr-2021	26-Apr-2021	YES	Schnaithmann

Permit #	Municipality	Location/Address	Category	Application Type	Project Description	Application Received	Notification of Complete Application	Permit Required By	Permit Issued On	Comply with Timelines	Staff
58-21	West Perth	Hagarty Drain	Minor	Municipal Drain	1110 metre enclosure and 492 metre bottom cleanout	5-Dec-2019	9-Apr-2021	30-Apr-2021	26-Apr-2021	YES	Ramsey
60-21	London	1545 Trfalgar Street	Minor	Municipal Project	Proposed construction of a new playground structure in Kiwanis Park - Central South	29-Apr-2021	29-Apr-2021	20-May-2021	30-Apr-2021	YES	Verscheure

---

**To:** UTRCA Board of Directors

**From:** Tracy Annett

**Date:** May 17, 2021 **Agenda #:** 7.2

**Subject:** REGULATORY PROPOSAL CONSULTATION **Filename:** ::ODMA\GRPWISE\UT\_ GUIDE: Regulations Defining Core Mandate and Improving Governance, Oversight and Accountability of Conservation Authorities **MAIN.UTRCA\_PO.Admin istration:4054.1**

---

## SUMMARY

The Province has released the [MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND PARKS REGULATORY PROPOSAL CONSULTATION GUIDE: Regulations Defining Core Mandate and Improving Governance, Oversight and Accountability of Conservation Authorities](#) to consult with stakeholders and the public in its first phase of finalizing proposed regulations for the Conservation Authorities Act. Staff will work with Conservation Ontario to submit comments to the Environmental Registry.

## DISCUSSION

As previously reported to the Board in reports providing updates to the Conservation Authorities Act related to Bill 108, Minister Yuerk's August 16, 2019 Letter, and Bill 229, the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) posted a consultation guide to the Environmental Registry on Thursday May 13, 2021.

### What is the Regulatory Proposal Consultation Guide?

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is consulting on the proposed regulations that would be made under the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA). This document is a consultation guide being used to gather feedback on the Ministry's regulatory postings on the Ontario's Environmental Registry.

### What is being reviewed at this time?

The proposed regulations for consultation in phase one are focused on:

- details on the programs and services conservation authorities will implement and how the programs and services may be funded, such as the:
  - mandatory programs and services conservation authorities will deliver
  - proposed agreements with participating municipalities that may be required to fund non-mandatory programs and services with municipal dollars, and the transition period to establish those agreements
- the requirement for conservation authorities to establish community advisory boards
- a Minister's regulation under section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* that consolidates individual CA regulations regarding the public's use of authority-owned land including, prohibited activities and activities requiring permits on conservation authority owned lands



### **How were the proposed regulations developed?**

Earlier this year, the Province established a Working Group of stakeholders to provide guidance in developing the proposed regulations. The Working Group consists of representatives from Conservation Authorities, Conservation Ontario, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, as well as the development and agricultural sectors. The group is chaired by Hassaan Basit, President and Chief Executive Officer of Conservation Halton.

### **How much time is available to submit feedback on the proposed regulations?**

The Province is providing 45 days. The deadline is June 27

### **What are the next steps?**

Staff will be attending information sessions scheduled by MECP to help facilitate our understanding. Conservation Ontario will also be working with Conservation Authorities to prepare a submission to the government. The content of this submission will be on the June Conservation Ontario Council agenda.

From an initial review, staff appreciate the efforts of the Working Group. This forum provided an effective process for Conservation Authorities to collaborate with stakeholders to educate about the work CA's undertake by providing on-the-ground examples of the integrated watershed management approach. The 'Other Programs and Services' inclusion of *Core Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy* is a significant addition as a result of these efforts.

Staff are pleased that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is proposing January 1, 2023 as the prescribed date by which agreements must be in place. The additions proposed will achieve greater transparency while recognizing the variability amongst CA's, municipalities, and local conditions/management objectives that are scalable, not prescriptive. The specific details of the Regulatory Authority for agreements for municipal funding of non-mandatory programs and services and the Regulatory Authority for a transition period/plan to develop the agreements is proposed to be combined into one Minister's regulation called the Regulation for Municipal Agreements and Transition Period.

The Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) posting provides a 45 day consultation period on the proposal, closing on Sunday June 27, 2021. Phase 2 of the consultation will focus on Section 28 regulations and is expected to be posted in the coming weeks.

### **CONCLUSION**

As noted, staff will be participating in information sessions scheduled by MECP and will provide comments to Conservation Ontario as a coordinated submission to the ERO. In addition, staff will circulate the comments to the Chief Administrative Officers of member municipalities to encourage them to comment on the Environmental Registry of Ontario [ERO 019-2986](#) regarding the Regulatory proposals (Phase 1) of the Conservation Authorities Act regarding the consultation outlined in the [Consultation](#) Guide.

Our current objective is to ensure the regulations being developed by the Province can be effectively implemented by conservation authorities and contribute to our mandate to protect Ontario's watersheds.

### **PREPARED & RECOMMENDED BY:**

Tracy Annett, MCIP, RPP,  
General Manager / Secretary Treasurer

---

**To: UTRCA Board of Directors**

**From: Sharon Viglianti**

**Date: April 28, 2021**

**Subject: Group Insurance Renewal**

**Agenda #: 7.3**

**Filename: Human Resources  
#24435**

---

As reported in our report of July, 2020, the UTRCA last sent its employee group insurance package out for tender in late 2013 and as a result, in March, 2014 we moved to Equitable Life Insurance as our new group insurance carrier. It was felt that it was now time to take our plan to market again to make sure we were getting the best value for our money, so in the fall of 2020, we surveyed our employees for their views of our current carrier and our overall plan design then in January, 2021, we asked AON Consulting (our broker) to proceed with taking our plan out for tender.

In reviewing the bids we received from 6 different insurance companies, we took into account "5 Pillars of Benefits Strategy" which include:

1. The Employee View
2. The Employer View
3. The Competitive View
4. The Financial View
5. The Environmental Landscape View

The end result was the decision to remain with Equitable Life giving us a 4.2% decrease in the cost of our benefit package for the 2021/22 renewal period with no change to our actual plan design.

It should be noted that we have not increased our paramedical or dental coverage dollar limits in more than 18 years. Having a strong benefits package is a key recruitment tool so this may be an area to examine further in the future.

Prepared by:

Sharon Viglianti,  
HR/Payroll Administrator

*fyi*

May 2021



*Solitary Sandpiper*

[www.thamesriver.on.ca](http://www.thamesriver.on.ca)

Twitter [@UTRCMarketing](https://twitter.com/UTRCMarketing)

Facebook [@UpperThamesRiverConservationAuthority](https://www.facebook.com/UpperThamesRiverConservationAuthority)



### Community Science Projects Launched!

On May 11, the UTRCA launched [two new community science projects](#) aimed at involving local residents in collecting useful environmental information about the watershed. Community science engages members of the public in collecting data, which can be used to increase scientific knowledge and inform decision making.

The new [Community Nature Project](#) encourages people to make observations about the animals and plants they see in the watershed and log them using the iNaturalist Canada platform. iNaturalist is an on-line platform where participants can record and share biodiversity information, learn more about their local environment, and connect with other

naturalists. To guide people on how to use the iNaturalist platform and get involved with the Community Nature Project, the UTRCA will host a free webinar on Wednesday, May 19 from 7-8 pm. [Register for this webinar.](#)

The UTRCA is also working with watershed property owners to pilot a new [Community Precipitation Monitoring Project](#). Participants will measure and record daily precipitation using the online Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) platform. CoCoRaHS is a community based network of volunteers across North America who measure and map daily precipitation. The UTRCA plans to expand the project based on the first pilot year. **Contact: [Erin Dolmage](#), Community Education Technician**

### European Gypsy Moth - They're Back!

Our news is probably not what you want to hear, especially if your trees experienced significant defoliation from this non-native invasive pest in 2020. The first hatches of this year's Gypsy Moth larvae were observed in London on April 29.

UTRCA staff began manually removing Gypsy Moth egg masses in several of London's Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs), in the fall of 2020. To date, staff have removed over

15,000 egg masses through a combination of scraping and disposing as well as smothering with dormant horticultural oil. Although these control methods were limited to the first few metres of the tree trunks, we estimate nearly 7.5 million larvae were prevented from hatching in the ESAs. We also assisted staff at Wildwood and Pittock Conservation Areas in removing several thousand egg masses in early 2021.



Main photo and top inset: Gypsy moth egg masses and hatching caterpillars on April 29. On average, 500 larvae may emerge from one egg mass. Lower inset: A larger caterpillar can be identified by the pairs of blue and red dots along its back.

The Gypsy Moth was first introduced to North America in 1869. They were first detected in Ontario in 1969 and the first major outbreak occurred in Eastern Ontario in the early 1980s. Since that time, the invasive forest pests have continued to spread.

The population is cyclical in nature, building and collapsing about every 10 years. The last outbreak in the London area occurred in 2009.

Population collapse is usually caused by a virus (*Nuclear polyhedrosis*) that spreads quickly from infected larvae to non-infected larvae, killing them. Dead larvae hanging on the tree in an upside down 'V' are a sign that the virus is at work in the population. A fungus (*Entomophaga maimaiga*) can also cause population collapse, particularly during cool wet weather. Dead larvae that appear brittle and hanging vertically on the tree trunks are a sign that the fungus is at work.

History has also shown that the population builds for approximately three years and then

collapses. 2021 is year three in the population expansion; we can only hope that this will be the year that it also collapses.

Even if the virus or fungus take hold in 2021, we will probably continue to see some significant defoliation. If the larvae are present, homeowners can use the burlap banding technique to capture and kill larvae. To do this, drape a piece of burlap over a length of twine and tie it around your tree at chest height. During the heat of the day, the larvae will retreat from the crown of the tree and seek shade under the burlap. At this point, you can collect and kill them by scraping them into a pail of soapy water, or burning.

- [How to Remove Gypsy Moth Egg Masses](#) - (YouTube video)
- [Provincial information on Gypsy Moth](#)
- [2021 Gypsy Moth Prediction](#)

Contact: [John Enright](#), Forester, or [Brandon Williamson](#), Land Management Technician



### Bringing Back Healthy Soil

Healthy soil is not only key to good crop production but is also the reason

certain fields are able to withstand the erosive forces of wind and water. UTRCA Conservation Services staff are working with a producer in Middlesex County and another in Oxford County to establish three acre soil health plots, to demonstrate whether fields can be returned to good health and productivity.

On each farm, small sections of highly erodible and less productive land were planted into a cover crop / forage crop mix and will be left for multiple years before being put back into row crop production. Before and after yield measurements will be compared to see if there is a response to this project.

We hope that demonstrating this best management practice and the improvements to long term soil health will inspire other landowners to consider this approach on their farms.

**Contact: [Craig Merkley](#), Conservation Services Specialist**

### Controlled Drainage Demo Day

If COVID-19 restrictions permit, UTRCA staff will host a demonstration day on June 10 at the new UTRCA demonstration farm near Thorndale. Landowners will be able to see a contour controlled drainage system and in-line water level control structures being installed.

**Contact: [Brad Glasman](#), Manager, Conservation Services**



**Contour Controlled Drainage System Demonstration Day**

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:




**It's Hatched!**  
We've partnered with **Start.ca** to grow environmental support.

start.ca/SpeciesAtRisk  
1-888-706-0001

Sign up with Start.ca and they'll donate \$25 to the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Internet | Home Phone | TV | Business Solutions

start.ca

UPPER THAMES RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

### New partnership hatches between Start.ca & UTRCA

Start.ca is London-based technology service company providing internet, phone, TV, and business services. The company has a strong corporate directive to give back to the communities where their customers live.

In 2019, Start.ca and the UTRCA partnered on the GREEN Leaders Initiative. This program develops leadership skills and promotes civic action around local environmental issues. UTRCA Education and Partnership staff delivered the program to 17 grade 7 and 8 watershed classes, and the success of this partnership inspired both sides to explore new ways to work together.

The challenges of the past year motivated Start.ca to seek other ways to generate some additional funding for local organizations whose work Start.ca supports. The GREEN Leaders Initiative partnership led Start.ca to understand other aspects of the UTRCA's programs, and increased their interest in finding more ways to support UTRCA efforts, outside of education.

The result is the newly launched UTRCA/Start.ca Sponsorship Program! Start.ca will donate \$25 for any new Start.ca subscriber who is directed from social media posts or selects "UTRCA support" during sign up. There is no additional cost to the subscriber. The donations support UTRCA efforts to create and protect wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and foster community engagement.

The program went live on April 27 and will run for one year, promoted through UTRCA and Start.ca social media, newsletters, blogs, and email.

Start.ca is a fast growing company. In 2020 they averaged 1200 new subscribers per month. With new promotions and new services coming in 2021, the hope is for even higher numbers.

The goals of the partnership are twofold:

- for new Start.ca subscribers to learn more about UTRCA programs and choose to support local habitat and water quality efforts with their subscription, and
- for UTRCA supporters to learn about Start.ca, a service-first local tech company with a corporate DNA of philanthropy, and support this company with their subscription.

The Start.ca team's values were demonstrated throughout our work together on the GREEN Leaders Initiative and continue through the development of this new sponsorship opportunity. Our two organizations have a shared passion for the environment and improving the lives of the watershed residents, and the UTRCA is thrilled to team up with Start.ca again. We are hoping that when pandemic restrictions ease, Start.ca employees will be able to get out in the field to help with projects and see their sponsorship dollars at work.

To sign up, visit [www.start.ca/SpeciesAtRisk](http://www.start.ca/SpeciesAtRisk) or call 1-888-706-0001.

**Contact: Brad Hertner, Community Partnership Specialist**

## Spring Weather Affecting Groundwater & Streams

The weather conditions over the late winter and early spring have benefited stream water quality and local groundwater recharge. The snow melt was gradual with minimal rain and runoff, creating ideal conditions for water to seep into the ground to help recharge local aquifers and well supplies. These recharge conditions were important as groundwater levels, measured at our monitoring wells, were lower at the end of 2020 and continue to be below normal levels this spring as a result of reduced precipitation in the watershed (46% of normal for February to April).

The UTRCA has 28 monitoring wells that measure water levels continuously, as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network.

This province-wide monitoring program started as a result of the drought years in 1998-1999. The data is used in-house by the Low Water Response Team for the Ontario Low Water Response Program. These wells are also sampled for water quality to understand emerging issues in local groundwater. The UTRCA has an additional 15 monitoring wells that are sampled for water quality, in partnership with the City of London. The water quality and quantity data is used for plan review and is [available online](#).



*Kaela Orton, Monitoring Technician, downloads groundwater level data at the monitoring well at the Golspie Swamp.*

So far this year, conditions have been generally good for stream water quality. There were no major winter thaws or significant winter/spring rainstorms or runoff, which are the events when most of the sediment and pollutant load is typically delivered to the Thames River each year. As a result of the reduced runoff, streams have been running very clear this spring, supplied mainly by groundwater discharge sources. These conditions will help to reduce this year's contaminant load, including nutrients, both locally in the Thames and downstream to Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie.

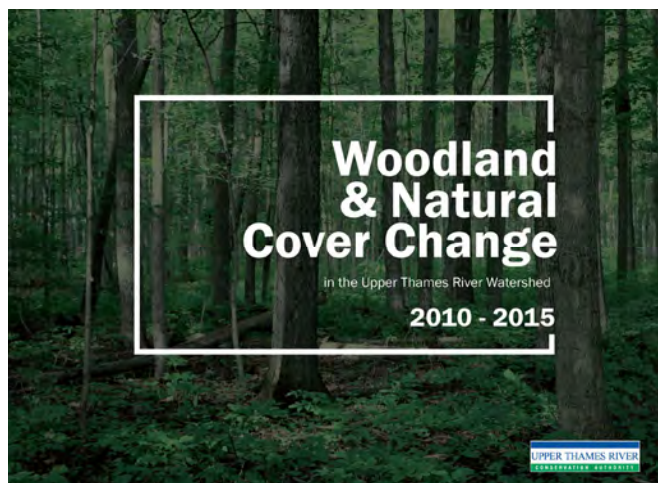
UTRCA staff monitors water quality in the river year-round. This includes the 28 subwatersheds in the Upper Thames monitored monthly for water chemistry and bacteria as part of the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network. This monitoring program has run for over 50 years and provides a good measure of long term pollutant levels.

Monitoring is done to better understand stream health and emerging issues as well as help guide implementation programs to protect water quality. The data is needed to measure progress toward environmental targets in the Upper Thames watershed including the 5-year Watershed Report Cards, with an upcoming report card in 2022.

**Contact: [Linda Nicks](#), Hydrogeologist, or [Karen Maaskant](#), Water Quality Specialist**

### **Natural Heritage Presentation going on (virtual) Road Show**

Cathy Quinlan, the UTRCA's Terrestrial Biologist, presented information on changes in the watershed's woodland and natural cover to the Board of Directors at a recent meeting. Collecting and interpreting long-term environmental data and reporting it back to member municipalities is an essential role of the UTRCA.



The UTRCA has been mapping forest cover and other vegetation cover for many years. GIS and digital air photography allow staff to more accurately map vegetation cover and track changes; even small changes to small woodlots

can be tracked and measured, over time. Our Watershed Report Cards relay these changes through the forest conditions grades and data, every five years. <http://thamesriver.on.ca/watershed-health/watershed-report-cards/>

Tracking changes in vegetation provides an indicator of watershed health. Natural cover helps protect watershed residents from the worst effects of climate change, conserve local species, and provides many other ecosystem services.

By overlaying the last updated mapping and the newest photography, staff can see:

- Losses - woodland and other vegetated areas that were cleared for urban development, agriculture, aggregates, etc.;
- Gains - new natural vegetation areas (e.g., young tree plantations, new meadows); and
- Changes - vegetation areas that matured or changed from one type of habitat to another (e.g., meadow to thicket).

This work is an example of the valuable environmental information collected by the UTRCA on behalf of its member municipalities. Staff will be providing the presentation to municipal staff, committees and councils over the next few months, as well as to interested partners.

**Contact: [Cathy Quinlan](#), Terrestrial Biologist**

### **Upper Medway Update**

Farmers in the Upper Medway are once again using check blocks or check strips to gain insights into the use of cover crops on their fields. For the second spring in a row, Conservation Services staff



sampled these field trials to look at differences in soil moisture, temperature, and residue between areas of the field with and without a cover crop. Crop yield data will be collected later this spring, which can assist farmers in making decisions regarding cover crops.

Staff continue to collect water quality samples to investigate the impact of over winter cover on sediment and nutrient losses from the watershed. The spring runoff was lower than normal this year and water levels have remained low since March. This may provide a unique comparison between previous, wetter years when looking for connections between what occurs on the landscape and in-stream water quality.

Check out the [video from one of the fields](#) this past fall.

**Contact: [Tatianna Lozier](#), Agricultural Soil & Water Quality Technician**

### Friends of Stoney Creek

Wally and Westly from the Friends of Stoney Creek are preparing the second plot for the Friends' pollinator garden, which UTRCA staff will plant later this month. COVID-19 delayed the project, but the extra year allowed the Friends to use chemical-free methods to prepare the plots.



A tarp was used at one site to eradicate the grass and the second site was prepped by rototilling.

The City of London's Neighbourhood Decision Making program provided funding for the project.

**Contact: [Linda Smith](#), Community Partnership Specialist**

### Inspiring a Healthy Environment, UTRCA Style

For the second spring in a row, community groups and students adhered to the provincial stay-at-home order in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19. Various UTRCA staff stepped up and stepped out to ensure the planting of 2200 trees and shrubs was completed in the UTRCA's Communities for Nature Program. While we would rather have worked directly with the various Rotary Clubs, students, and community groups, we are grateful for their support in other ways to get new trees in the ground.



Funding for some of the projects was received from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, EcoAction, South London Rotary, St. Marys Rotary, Town of St. Marys, City of Stratford, Andrew Hodges Funeral Home, Evans and Logan Funeral Homes, Brock and Visser Funeral Homes in Woodstock and Thamesford, Zorra Township residents, and the Habitat Stewardship Program.

Tree nurseries are also feeling the impact of the pandemic, and we want to thank our partners who delivered in spite of their own challenges. Worker shortages, demand out-pacing supply, and delivery scheduling complications made for another interesting spring planting season.

Thank you to all staff who worked together on the projects, to the UTRCA fleet staff who made sure we had vehicles to transport trees, and to the health and safety staff who work behind the scenes to ensure proper protocol is followed during these unusual times.

**Contact: [Karen Pugh](#), Resource Specialist**





*The Yellow Warbler is a migrant species that nests in London's natural areas and along the Thames River.*

### **UTRCA Staff Help London Get Certified as a Bird Friendly City!**

London is one of the first four Canadian cities to be officially certified as a Bird Friendly City by Nature Canada! The other three certified cities are Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary.

The UTRCA's Linda Smith and Julie Read have been working on the London Bird Team, along with other community partners including City of London, Friends of Stoney Creek, London Environmental Network, Nature London, Salthaven, and Western University's Advanced Facility for Avian Research. Brendon Samuels (a PhD candidate with the Advanced Facility for Avian Research) is the London Bird Team Coordinator.

Nature London has generously funded the London Bird Team and co-sponsored the recent World Migratory Bird Day Celebration along with London Environmental Network.

Nature Canada's criteria for a Bird Friendly City outline how cities can ensure they keep birds safe; protect and increase bird habitat; as well as offer educational opportunities in their communities. Being a Bird Friendly City is a cause for celebration for London as it demonstrates how much our community does to help save birds' lives! Nature Canada is hoping to certify at least 30 more Canadian cities by World Migratory Bird Day 2022.

The London Bird Team celebrated World Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 8. UTRCA

organized and hosted two webinars: "Attracting Migratory Birds to the Forest City" with Andrea Boyer (London Public Library's Environmentalist in Residence), and "Using Physiology and Automated Telemetry to Understand Stopover and Movement of Migratory Birds and Bats in Human-Dominated Landscapes" with Dr. Chris Guglielmo (Professor of Biology, Western).

UTRCA staff also created a World Migratory Bird Day series of videos and fun bird trivia for families. Fiona Navickas and Kim Gilbert created videos and nature challenges to help Londoners learn about migrating birds, offering tips for beginner birdwatchers and outlining how viewers can help migratory birds. Cathy Quinlan filmed a segment on how to draw a migratory bird: the beautiful Canada Warbler! Steve Sauder edited all the videos and did a wonderful job promoting the event.

In addition to this special event, UTRCA makes significant contributions to London being a Bird Friendly City by ensuring birds are provided with healthy habitat for their migratory stopovers and nesting sites and by increasing London's biodiversity. UTRCA also offers ongoing community education to help London residents appreciate and protect our feathered friends.

The London Bird Team is currently running a [\*\*poll to choose a City Bird for London.\*\*](#)

Visit [www.birdfriendlylondonca](http://www.birdfriendlylondonca) to learn more about London's Bird Friendly City project. Please spread the word and follow the Bird Friendly London Ontario Facebook Group and @birdfriendlyldn on Twitter.

**Contact: [Julie Read](#), Community Education Supervisor (Fanshawe)**

### **Living Labs Initiative: Collaboration Program**

The Living Laboratories Initiative launched in Ontario on May 10<sup>th</sup>, joining a network of projects ongoing across the country. This Initiative brings together farmers, scientists, and other collaborators to co-develop and test innovative practices and technologies to address agri-environmental issues.



*The UTRCA is monitoring subwatersheds to support the Living Labs Initiative, building on years of data collection in several target areas.*

The UTRCA's role is to collect water quality and quantity monitoring data and information on local adoption of Best Management Practices, which will be used to assist scientists in their research to understand the impact of land management on a variety of research objectives.

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is managing the three-year project under agreement with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Other project partners include the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, Essex Region Conservation Authority, Ontario Soil Network, Innovative Farmers Association of Ontario, and Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario.

**Contact: [Mike Funk](#), Agricultural Soil & Water Quality Technician**

## On the Agenda

The next UTRCA Board of Directors meeting will be held virtually on May 25, 2021.

- Approval of 2020 Audited Financial Statements
- Fees Update to Reflect Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) Costs
- Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Status Report – Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (O.Reg157/06)
- Benefits Renewal
- Funding Sources

Please visit the "Board Agendas & Minutes" page at [www.thamesriver.on.ca](http://www.thamesriver.on.ca) for draft agendas, audio/video recordings, and minutes.

**Contact: [Michelle Viglianti](#), Administrative Assistant**