

Harrington and Area Community Association  
( HACA )

c/o Doug Diplock , Chair

Harrington Pond Environmental Assessment Team

Dear Team Members,

During your enquiries and assessments you will have come to realize the many species of birds, animals, plants, insects, and amphibians that call the Pond and the area around it home. These species form an ecosystem that has developed to be dependent on the Pond for its existence.

Aside from the obvious environmental benefits of a healthy ecosystem what does the existence of The Pond, from a human perspective, mean to people who live in the area and to visitors?

The Pond in Harrington has always been a focal point of the village and people who live in various parts of Ontario have always associated Harrington with The Pond. Residents who live here often describe the location of their homes as being east of The Pond or West of The Pond, or just below The Pond or even, in deed, on The Pond. The Pond, and the Grist Mill, early on, became the reason for Harrington's existence and is one of the historical links to our cultural heritage in this small village.

The Mill was originally built in 1847 and is one of the few remaining historical structures from that era that provides a very real link to History. The Mill, and the Millpond, have existed in a symbiotic relationship for well over 150 years. The Mill, millpond, and surrounding natural ecosystem form a cultural landscape that would be threatened by the loss of an integral component of this landscape – The Pond.

The Harrington and Area Community Association ( HACA ) is an incorporated entity, with an elected board and membership, as the name implies, of residents who currently or in the past, have lived in the area. The Association is deeply involved in Community Issues.

In 1999 HACA entered into an agreement with UTRCA for the management and maintenance of the Harrington Conservation Area including the Grist Mill.

The volunteers in the area have worked countless hours, raised significant amounts of money, and obtained Provincial and Municipal Grants to assist in the restoration of the Mill. Part of the restoration process will see the Mill again functioning as before, with power being supplied by the water from the Pond.

HACA has worked closely with Government Agencies, Township Officials, outside Agencies and other Service Clubs to enhance enjoyment of the Conservation Area. All of these activities within the Conservation Area use the Pond as a focal point.

A fishing derby, held on the opening of trout season each spring, attracts hundreds of young children and for some, it is an introduction to fishing and outdoor activities that will continue for a lifetime.

During the spring and summer months and into the early fall the Pond is visited by hundreds of fishermen and fisherwomen on a regular basis. Some have even stated it is the only fishing hole they have found that is accessible by wheelchair-bound individuals.

Each August a BBQ is held on the banks of The Pond, attended by individuals from all across South Western Ontario. The BBQ is a major fundraising event for HACA and helps to support many local endeavours such as Concerts, Dances for all ages, Holiday Celebrations and more.

A birding/hiking trail has been established that encircles the Pond and is complete with a viewing stand at the south end of The Pond. Each year, in all Seasons, many hikers and birding enthusiasts use the trail and the opportunity to view wildlife and commune with Nature.

The Village of Harrington, as is all of Zorra, is serviced by Volunteer Firefighters. The Pond is the only source of water in the north section of Zorra that is accessible in winter months and has been vital to the Fire Department on several occasions. A loss of The Pond could be detrimental to safety and well-being of the neighbourhood inhabitants.

Cost, of course, is always an issue, and while the least expensive path would be to, in the absence of any imminent threat to life or property, just leave the Pond as it is, and as it has existed for years. The most expensive path may well be the one that threatens the existence of a small village, a cultural and historical link to our past and a fragile ecosystem.

Any decision made on the future of The Pond will have an impact on all of these issues, and indeed on the existence of the village, the lives of the people in the area and future generations.

The Harrington and Area Community Association respectfully request that all these points be considered as you determine your various recommendations.

Sincerely,

Doug Diplock

Chairperson

Harrington and Area Community Association