

Conservation Behaviours and Attitudes in the Upper Thames and Grand River Watersheds Project Status – January 2015

A major Landowner Survey was conducted by the University of New Brunswick and Simon Fraser University in the spring of 2013 for the Grand River and Upper Thames River watersheds. The UTRCA and GRCA assisted with the survey implementation. The data from the survey was used by Jeff Brick of the UTRCA to complete a Major Research Paper which was a requirement for the completion of his Masters of Public Administration. The survey, and the subsequent analysis completed as part of this research has yielded some very interesting descriptive and statistical findings that can assist the UTRCA and the GRCA with future program development. This information on the characteristics of the rural non-farm and farm landowners that live in the Upper Thames and Grand Watersheds, along with information on their attitudes and behaviours, is very timely in terms of the anticipated development of new programs that will be focused on Great Lakes Water Quality. The research results have been presented to various stakeholders and there is significant interest in seeing further analysis done on the existing data and there is interest in seeing secondary research completed. The study findings should also be published in appropriate forums.

Canada Ontario Agreement (COA) funding has been secured to allow for:

- further analysis of the data;
- the completion of secondary research; and,
- the promotion and publication of study findings in appropriate forums.

The COA funding will allow the UTRCA to hire a Research Analyst that can focus on the specific project with guidance from Jeff Brick, other UTRCA staff and external partners. The funding will support a six month contract with a six month extension anticipated through the securement of 2015/2016 COA funding. It is possible that funding from other sources may be able to be secured also.

In terms of project timing, the UTRCA is hoping to have the Research Analyst Position hired and working by the middle to end of February 2015. The Research Analyst's work efforts would initially be targeted at background research and literature review and then move into the preparation of a research proposal and implementation.

More information on the project can be found at the following URL:

<http://thamesriver.on.ca/landowner-grants-stewardship/waterquality-and-agriculture-researchreports/landowner-attitudes-and-behaviour-research/>

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