

2.0 Vision for the Property Assessment Plan

2.1 UTRCA Strategic Plan

The mandate of the Conservation Authority under Section 20 of the Conservation Authorities Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 27) is to “establish and undertake, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, restoration, development, and management of natural resources other than gas, oil, coal and minerals.” Based on this mandate, in its 2004 Strategic Plan (F.J. Galloway Assoc. Inc. 2004) the UTRCA defined its mission as:

Dedicated to achieving a healthy environment on behalf of the watershed municipalities through leadership, expertise, education and community collaboration.

The following goals were developed to achieve this mission:

- Protect life and property from flood and erosion.
- Ensure a sustainable water supply.
- Protect and enhance water quality.
- Preserve and manage natural areas.
- Provide outdoor recreational opportunities.

The UTRCA developed six main areas of effort that represented the priorities the organization needed to focus on by 2008 to achieve its mission. One area of effort was:

Undertake the preparation of an Infrastructure and Asset Management Plan that involves assessing the need for and value of all of the UTRCA’s lands in terms of what assets should be sustained, and if there are assets that are no longer required.

2.2 Vision Statement of the Property Assessment Plan

Conservation planning must be goal-oriented to succeed. To achieve this, the Property Assessment Team developed the following vision statement for the Property Assessment Plan:

Demonstrating sustainable land management using measurable targets for stewardship and protection.

2.3 Guiding Principles of the Property Assessment Plan

Six guiding principles were developed as a tool for planning and decision-making:

- Must have regard for the current UTRCA Strategic Plan
- Must have regard for the Property Assessment Vision Statement
- Must have regard for UTRCA Environmental Planning Policies (UTRCA 2006)
- Must protect natural heritage and aquatic resources
- Must have the potential for naturalization (i.e., the driving ecological processes are not impaired or can be restored)
- Must have a high environmental benefit to cost ratio

2.4 Management Categories and Goals

The UTRCA developed five management categories that reflect the goals of the UTRCA strategic plan. Although all categories are important in achieving the UTRCA's mission statement, some categories are considered more important than others. The five management categories were ranked by the Property Assessment Team in order of importance according to the guiding principles:

1. Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems: Represent / capture the range of natural heritage biodiversity within the Upper Thames watershed. Protect and, where possible, enhance natural aquatic and semi aquatic communities and their habitat.
2. Hazards: Protect life and property from natural hazards.
3. Groundwater: Protect sensitive groundwater areas.
4. Recreation and Culture: Provide recreation opportunities that complement the other management categories / goals.
5. Aggregate: Demonstrate responsible aggregate management and rehabilitation to meet natural heritage potential.