



2018 Annual Report

Chairperson's Message

I am once again very honoured and privileged to be the Chairperson of the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority (CCCA). We have had another very successful year as we continue to fulfill our mandate to deliver programs and services on behalf of our member municipalities, deliver other programs and services that further our mandate, and deliver on our Provincially delegated responsibilities.

Critical to our success is our partnerships with municipalities and the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), highlighted by our outdoor environmental education programs. These were once again a wonderful success with over 4000 watershed residents participating in our outdoor programs. The Active Naturally Project has had almost 1,500 residents participating in healthy outdoor activities such as guided nature hikes. Marsh Quest saw over 500 students over three days learn about ecosystems, the East Elgin Secondary School Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) trained and received the tree planting help of over 20 students, and our new Healthy Watersheds Program with over 90 Grade 9 students participating. Not only do we value these relationships and results in our watershed residents, and in particular our young watershed residents, they are also critical to the success in the delivery of our core mandate.

Special events such as the Maple Syrup Festival, Carolinian Forest Festival, and Special Events at Springwater continue to be a success with over 4,000 members of the public from across Ontario attending. As we move into the future we will need to continue to support these events and implement even more creative ideas to generate the much needed financial support to the authority, which allows us to deliver on our mandate, while at the same time supporting our local businesses.

The management of natural hazards such as ice management in Port Bruce continues to be a challenge managed through an important collaboration. The combination of the expertise of the municipal and emergency management from Malahide, authority staff, and local contractors ensured we managed the ice for another season.

Municipalities continue to leverage the expertise of CCCA to deliver ecological services on their behalf such as the planting of over 10,000 native Carolinian trees and wildlife shrubs on both conservation lands as well as private holdings to enhance both wildlife habitat and biodiversity. The Authority continues to leverage its watershed knowledge by providing over 100 comments and formal review to development applications. These reviews occurred within all five municipal areas, and were provided based on science and a consistent watershed planning approach to protecting natural resources, irrespective of municipal boundaries. We plan to consult with municipalities about our services and how best to leverage our watershed knowledge and expertise to continue to improve the provision of our cost-effective services.

We went through a leadership transition this year with the retirement of Mr. Kim Smale. We thank Mr. Smale for his 41 years of service to the Authority. He built a very successful and efficient organization, delivering hundreds of stewardship projects, acquiring new significant environmental lands, and oversaw hundreds of environmental youth staff, many who have moved onto careers in conservation. As we welcome a new General Manager, we will embark on a strategic planning and business exercise that will guide our growth. We hope that the members of our watershed will participate in our public consultations to develop a strategy and business plan that ensures we meet the expectations of our partners and our watershed residents.

Finally, I would like to thank staff for their tireless efforts toward fulfilling the Authorities mandate, but in particular I would like to thank the many volunteers, some of which work every day with staff to ensure we deliver the programs and services the watershed residents have come to expect from us.

Rick Cerna, Chairperson



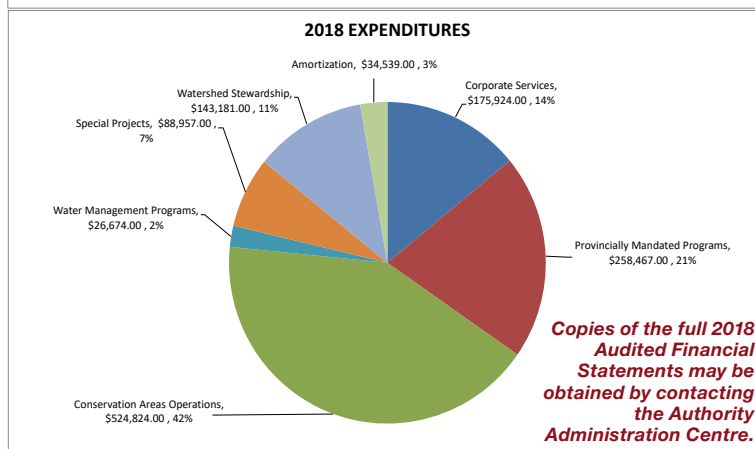
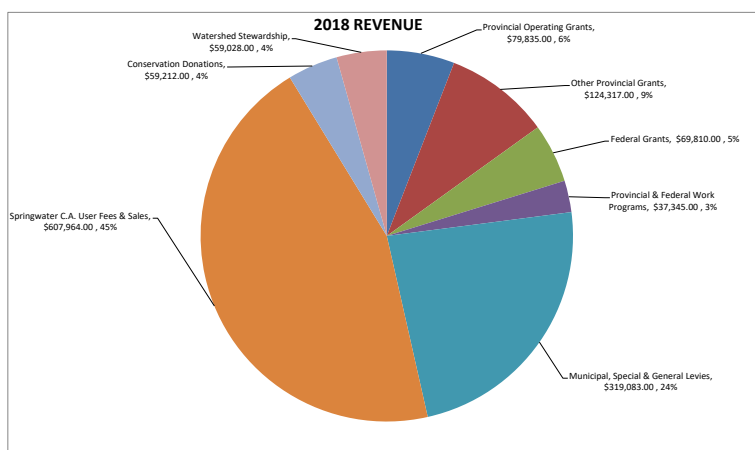
Corporate Services

The activities of the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority are governed by a Board of Directors comprised of five (5) members appointed by the five (5) member municipalities of the Catfish Creek watershed.

Board Member	Municipality
Rick Cerna (Chairperson)	Township of Malahide
Mark Tinlin (Vice-Chairperson)	City of St. Thomas
Sally Martyn	Municipality of Central Elgin
Arthur Oslach	Town of Aylmer
David Mayberry	Township of South-West Oxford

Staff Member	Position
Mr. Kim Smale	General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (until November 2018)
Christopher Wilkinson	General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (started November 2018)
Susan Simmons	Financial Services Coordinator
Ed Pietrzak	Conservation Areas Supervisor (until January 2018)
Dusty Underhill	Conservation Areas Supervisor (started February 2018)
Tony Difazio	Resource Planning Coordinator
Peter Dragunas	Water Management Technician
Tiffany Kalita-Guay	Program Support Assistant (until September 2018)
Kelsey Oatman	Program Support Assistant (started September 2018)
Austin Verbeek	Field Technician

2018 Financial Report



Conservation Lands

In 2018, the CCCA focused its efforts on initiatives that promoted accessibility, awareness, and appreciation of nature on lands owned and managed by the Conservation Authority. All thanks to the generous financial support from different government agencies and community partners, the following projects were realized:

- A one (1) acre wetland and wildlife habitat was created at the Brown Conservation Area thanks to Ontario Power Generation and Ducks Unlimited;
- A new fishing access platform was constructed at the Yarmouth Natural Heritage Area (YNHA) thanks to Green Lane Community Fund and the Aylmer Area Community Foundation;
- A new walking bridge was constructed, with the assistance of the ELP (Environmental Leadership Program) students, within the Springwater campground to improve the safety and convenience of campers initiated thanks to the Dorothy Fay Palmer Estate;
- Trail signage was installed along the 5.6 kilometres of walking trails at the YNHA and along the 4.2 kilometers of walking trails at the Archie Coulter Conservation Area (ACCA), thanks to the support of the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.



**Springwater Conservation Area
Pedestrian Bridge - Dorothy Fay
Palmer Estate, Environmental
Leadership Program**
Photo The Aylmer Express



**Conservation
Award Recipient
- Drake Larsen
(second from
right) and Sarah
Hargreaves (right)**
Photo The Aylmer
Express



**Student Scholarship Award
- Robyn Whaley (left)**
Photo The Aylmer Express



**Winner of Instagram Photo Contest -
Springwater Forest**
Photo Michael Krahn



**Aylmer Area
Community Foundation**
Date: November 8, 2018
Pay to the Order of: Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
Two thousand, one hundred and 100/100 Dollars \$2,100
From: Aylmer Area Community Foundation
aylmerfoundation.on.ca
**Aylmer Area Community Foundation
Cheque Presentation**
Photo The Aylmer Express



**Staff Photo of Mr. Kim Smale's
Retirement Celebration**
Photo CCCA

Environmental Planning

- In 2018, the CCCA began to update our Regulation Mapping Schedules for the watershed pursuant to the Conservation Authorities Act. The mapping will incorporate revised wetland boundaries, updates to erosion rates along the Lake Erie Shoreline, and software improvements including ortho-rectified aerial photography. These updates will make it easier for landowners and the general public to view properties that may be impacted by Natural Hazards such as creeks, wetlands, eroding/unstable slopes, and shorelines along Lake Erie.

- The revised Regulation Mapping Schedules, in conjunction with updated CCCA Regulations and Land Use Planning Policies, will be available for review and comment by the general public in 2019.

- Since 1950, the CCCA has been fulfilling our mandate under the Conservation Authorities Act to deliver programs and services on behalf of our member municipalities. This includes commenting on Planning Act applications and regulating development in proximity to Natural Hazards.

- Staff from the CCCA reviewed and provided comments on the following development applications, inquiries and land use planning applications in 2018:

- Reviewed and commented on 68 Planning Act applications and Environmental Assessments;
- Issued 46 work permits or authorizations relative to the Conservation Authorities Act, or the Drainage Act; and
- Provided responses to 55 property inquiries (legal, real estate, general information requests).

Stewardship Services



White Erosion Control Project - Environmental Leadership Program Students - Stewardship Services

Once again, landowners in the Catfish Creek Watershed contributed to a bi-national effort to improve water quality in the Great Lakes. The contribution each landowner is making is necessary to achieve incremental improvements to the health of the entire Lake Erie Basin. The scope of the projects may vary, however the vision each landowner has demonstrated in 2018 will grow across the landscape in years to come. Projects include wetland construction, stream-bank erosion control, buffer strip enhancement, and tall grass prairie restoration. Reducing discharges of phosphorus is an important goal, however restoration projects also improve soil

health and provide fish and wildlife habitat including critical habitat for species at risk.

In 2018, six landowners took advantage of funding assistance from partners such as the Elgin Stewardship Council, Elgin Clean Water Program, Ducks Unlimited, and the Ontario Soil and Crop Association to carry out twelve new restoration projects. Four new wetlands were created totalling seven acres, along with twelve acres of new tall grass prairies throughout the watershed. Thanks to grants from the Province of Ontario, approximately 250 metres of eroded streambank was restored along the main branch of Catfish Creek.



Wetland & Wildlife Habitat Creation
Brown Conservation Area

Water Management

The winter of 2018 produced above average snowfall amounts and well below average temperatures which in turn produced above average ice thickness throughout the Catfish Creek watershed, increasing the potential for flooding. One (1) Flood Watch, four (4) Flood Warning, and eight (8) Watershed Condition Statements were issued during 2018. Recognizing the effectiveness of the ice breaking operations and mitigation efforts in Port Bruce, municipal emergency preparedness and the significant adverse weather and ice conditions experienced during the freshet runoff hindered the ability for creek ice to easily migrate out to Lake Erie inducing significant flood occurrences throughout the watershed.

As requirements for water increase and climate changes occur, severe water level variability is increasingly widespread. CCCA staff work closely and provide current water level data to the Catfish Creek Low Water Response Team and a local Irrigation Advisory Committee to assist them in making decisions on the appropriate conservation measures and actions for irrigators to achieve provincially outlined water conservation criteria. In the low water season of 2018 (last spring to early fall), the Catfish Creek watershed received below average precipitation and the water flows within the watershed were below seasonal averages. This combination prompted the CCCA to issue a Level 1 Low Water Condition Statement in July, 2018.

Other notable water management activities in 2018 included:

- Continual monitoring of streamflow and watershed physiological conditions for flood forecasting and low water to assist with water management initiatives;
- Collected groundwater data through the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network;
- Provided technical advice and assistance for Permit To Take Water applications;
- Participated in the Ontario Domestic Action Plan Reducing Phosphorus to Minimize Algal Blooms in Lake Erie;
- Reviewed the CCCA's Flood Warning, Flood Operations and Ice Management Plans.



Water Management - Ice and Flood Management
- Port Bruce Flood Management



2019 Special Events Calendar



March 2-24

Maple Syrup Festival

* weekends & March Break

April 27

Opening Day of Trout Fishing

May 11

Tim Hortons Kids Trout Derby

June 7-19

Van Fest

July 27

Paws-ively Elgin

August 16-18

Fred Eaglesmith Charity Music Festival

December 7

Christmas Spirit Walk

**For more information contact our office at 519-773-9037
or visit our website at www.catfishcreek.ca**

Special Projects

The Active Naturally Project has developed programs in the CCCA watershed to foster the lifelong enjoyment of sport and physical activity in persons with disabilities, ethnic communities, low-income persons, children, youth, women and girls. The goal of the Active Naturally Initiative is to host 1500 participants in these programs and events by July 2019. Throughout 2018, Active Naturally has hosted 1341 people in a number of events such as:



- The Healthy Hikes series with Ranger Em, that includes five hikes that were open to the public and all were themed, such as a Springwater Scavenger Hunt and an October Owl Prowl, attracting over 70 guests; and twelve targeted hikes with school and community groups drawing over 300 participants

- The purchase of 25 sets of snowshoes to enhance winter curriculum at our Conservation Areas



- A Girl Guide Day which consisted of 115 girl guides from all across southwest Ontario participating in outdoor activities at Springwater Conservation Area
- Hosting of the Carolinian Forest Festival, where the Program Manager facilitated a station attended by over 700 students who learned about forest management practices
- Working with Participation House and Dale Brain Injury Services (two organizations that work with individuals with severe physical disabilities

(see over)



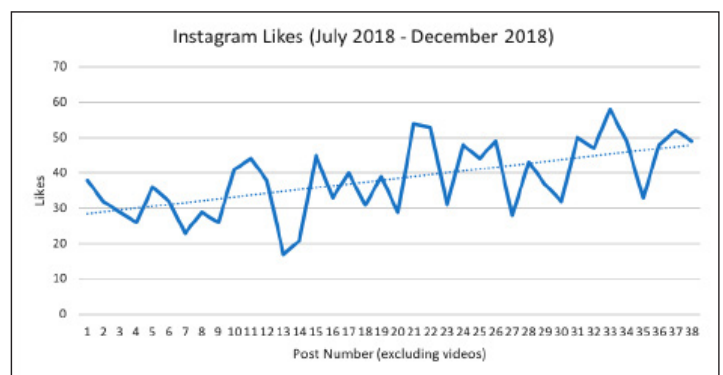
and that have suffered extreme brain injury) to teach 35 clients how to fish and to provide opportunities to learn about different fish species and create an avenue to discuss the health benefits of being outside on our mental health

Communications

This year we put more focus on our social media by increasing posting on Facebook and joining Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. With the intent to better market and promote events, jobs, volunteer opportunities and our services as a Conservation Authority. It is also an amazing way to interact with our “customers”, seeing images they post and sharing them with others; and passing along informative articles and news about conservation and natural resources.

Our Facebook page Springwater Conservation Area is our most popular social media channel as we have been running it since 2012. We Joined Instagram and Twitter in July 2018, where we average 31 and 12 new followers a month respectively. We see the most interaction and engagement on Instagram with pictures of wildlife and landscapes (our two most liked pictures are one from our Resource Planning Coordinator, Tony Difazio, of the Port Bruce Harbour during a windstorm and the other a snapshot from a visitor of Springwater Pond). We see the most interaction and engagement on Twitter when the tweets involve other community groups or trending topics (our most liked tweet with 11 likes is from the Carolinian Forest Festival). We then joined LinkedIn in November and YouTube in December. LinkedIn is a good source for posting about job opportunities and other business related articles and information. After attending a Conservation Ontario communication workshop, it became obvious that videos receive the most interaction with viewers; therefore, there will be a focus on videography and YouTube in the upcoming year to improve our customer engagement in 2019.

Much of the media landscape is done online and through social media, making it an important communications tool to maintain a relevant dialogue with CCCA's stakeholders (or audience), and to maintain the relevance of the CCCA brand in 2019.



Community Outreach / Environmental Education



Community Participation - Active Naturally Initiative
Photo The Aylmer Express



Springwater Special Event - Kids, Cops and Canadian Tire Fishing Derby
Photo The Aylmer Express



Springwater Maple Syrup Program
Photo The Aylmer Express



MarshQuest - Yarmouth Natural Heritage Area
Photo The Aylmer Express



Carolinian Forest Festival - Springwater Conservation Area
Photo The Aylmer Express



Springwater Special Event - Paws-itively Elgin
Photo The Aylmer Express

Mission Statement

"To communicate and deliver resource management services and programs in order to achieve social and ecological harmony for the watershed"

The **CCCA** is a non-profit organization that needs your financial support and volunteerism to ensure locally driven environmental initiatives continue in the future. All donations are used for programs and projects within the Catfish Creek watershed.

YES, I would like to demonstrate my devotion and vision for a healthy environment by donating \$ _____ in support of the following initiative(s):

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protection & Preservation of Conservation Lands | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Environmental Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Habitat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Springwater Forest Preservation/Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Commemorative Forest Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands Restoration |

Official tax receipt will be issued for minimum donations of \$20.00. **Commemorative gifts and land donations graciously received.**

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

**Payment in Cash, Visa, Mastercard, or Debit will gladly be accepted at the CCCA Office or please mail a cheque to:
CATFISH CREEK CONSERVATION AUTHORITY, 8079 Springwater Rd., R.R.#5, Aylmer, ON N5H 2R4**



2018 Partners/Donors/Volunteers



(please notify our office of any errors or omissions)

A1 Unique Installations	Delta Power Supply	Hamilton Ward & Cathers	Ministry of Agriculture, Food, & Rural Affairs	Silcox, Helen
Aaroc Aggregates Inc.	Devriendt, Fred	Herrington, Victor	Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks	Sinden, Tom
Aylmer Area Community Foundation	Dhulster, Ronald & Patricia	Hill, Thomas & Cheryl	Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry	Smale, Kim & D.J.
Aylmer Express	Dowler-Karn Fuels	House, Jeff	Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport	Soen, Mary
Aylmer Optimist Club	Driver Realty	Howey, Marilyn	Moreland, Kevin	Springwater Packers
Aylmer Tire	Ducks Unlimited	Huron Tractor	Municipality of Central Elgin	Steelway Building Systems
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Biskup, Stefan	EESS-Environmental Leadership Program	Irwin, Sylvia	Ontario Power Generation	Tenhor, Henry
Brackenbury, Taylor	Elgin ALUS	Jakob, Joseph	Order of Good Cheer	Tenk, Alanna
Brooks, Cathy	Elgin Chrysler Ltd.	K&K Locksmiths	Oudman, Andrew & Marilyn	Thames Valley District School Board
Brown, John & Gould-Brown, Dianne	Emery, George	Kettle Creek C.A.	Plaunt, Chris	Tim Hortons Aylmer
Cadman, Charles & Sharon	Enabling Accessibility Fund	Kielstra, Henry & Ena	Reid, Sheila	Town of Aylmer
Cam's Heating and Air Conditioning	EPCOR	Koolen Electric	Riggs Engineering	Township of Malahide
Casier, Ron	Essex Region C.A.	Laemers Excavating	Rimnyak, Bill & Linda	Township of South West Oxford
Cerna, Rick (Fairview Farms Aylmer)	Exact Septic Installations	Laidlaw, Shauna	Rochus, Gary	VanFest
City of St. Thomas	Farmington Mechanical Inc.	Loncke, Pauline	Ronald, Dick & Janet	Vanhoucke, Raymond & Margaret
Coleman, Stefanie	Febrey, Linda	London Centennial Wheelers	Ryan's No Frills	Wagler Mini Barns
Conservation Ontario	Fick, Don & Rosina	London District Catholic School Board	Salvation Army Corrections	Ward, Tess
County of Elgin	Fleming, Andy	Long Point Region C.A.	Sawdust Entertainment	Weber, Dwight
Cross, Brent & Carolyn	Forests Ontario	Lower Thames Valley C.A.	Scheers, Mary & Gary	Williams Funeral Home Ltd.
Dale, Abbie	Friends of Springwater	Malcomson, Paul & Lisa	Scott Lewis Auto Sales	Wilson Well Drilling
Dale Equipment	Grand River C.A.	Maple Syrup Admissions		Wiltsie Truck Bodies
Decraemer, Walter & Dorothy	Great Lakes Guardian Community Foundation	Martyn, Sally		Yarmouth Crane
	Greenlane Environmental	Mayberry, David & Kathryn		Zap's Tree Service
	H.A. Kebbel Funeral Home	Miernicki, Tracy		

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