



Annual Report 2017





Photo by David Bartus

About Us

The Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority was established in 1950 under Ontario's Conservation Authorities Act to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources on a watershed scale, in partnership with its 15 member municipalities, the Province of Ontario and its watershed residents.

Saugeen Conservation is one of 36 Conservation Authorities across Ontario and is a member of Conservation Ontario.

SVCA's watershed jurisdiction covers 4,632 sq. km (1,788 sq. miles), consisting of the drainage basins of the Saugeen, Penetangore and Pine Rivers, as well as those watercourses along the adjoining Lake Huron shoreline.

In delivering its programs, Saugeen Conservation has acquired over 8,498 ha (21,000 acres) of land for a variety of purposes, ranging from the protection of important wetlands and significant forests to the provision of recreation areas and campgrounds.

In addition to its main focus as a conservation agency, Saugeen Conservation is involved in provincial conservation issues, as a voting member of Conservation Ontario.





A message from our Chair

Welcome to Saugeen Conservation's 2017 Annual Report

It gives me great pleasure to present to you, our accomplishments over the past year. In reading over these pages, it will become clear why an agency like Saugeen Conservation is essential to the well-being of this watershed, now, and into the future.

Over the past year, members and staff have implemented a number of environmental endeavours throughout this vast watershed. On the top of the list are projects such as the acquisition of **new flood warning software, agricultural workshops, the removal of a dam and the naturalization of two waterways.**

Staff also secured the help and support of numerous partners in implementing **stewardship projects ranging from the greening of stormwater management ponds, to the mechanical removal of invasive *Phragmites australis*** at Brucedale Conservation Area, on Lake Huron. In addition to the above, Saugeen Conservation ordered over **120,000 seedlings in 2017 for a total of 33 landowners.**

We certainly cannot forget **June 23rd, when a total of 149mm of rain fell in the Mount Forest area**, mostly within a five hour period. This rain event caused significant flooding on the South Saugeen River and in neighbouring watersheds. Staff provided ongoing messaging throughout the event.

This past year also saw the development of new tourism packages that combined local culture with the unique features of the **Greenock Swamp, Ontario's single largest forested wetland**. Once packaged and promoted, with the help of Regional Tourism Organization 7, interest soared beyond expectations.

The final adoption of the new **Planning and Regulations Policies Manual** was an important step for our regulations officers in 2017. This document is an excellent tool in providing guidance to SVCA's planning and regulations department.

In addition, the long-anticipated **floodplain mapping** for the Village of Teeswater was completed. This project allowed a regionally important industrial expansion to take place, compliant with SVCA regulations.

We were extremely fortunate this past year to be the recipients of two **significant property donations**, courtesy of the Woods Family and Mr. Brian Powers. A total of 99 ha (246 acres), of forested land and important wetlands are permanently protected for future generations.

I would be remiss if I did not recognize our friends and **partners with the Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation**. They work tirelessly to advance the message of conservation, while raising funds for conservation efforts.

We are also very fortunate to have an **abundance of volunteers**, partner organizations, local groups and businesses, who help further conservation in countless ways. Without their support, much of what we do would not be possible.



During and after photos of a flooded property along the South Saugeen River in June.



Participants of the 'Legends of the Great Swamp' tours enjoying a day of fun and entertainment.

In closing, we look forward to the changes and challenges of 2018. **Together, we really can make a difference.**

Yours in conservation,

Luke Charbonneau
Chair



A total of 6,719 trees were sold during SVCA's 13th Annual Arbour Day Tree Sale in April.

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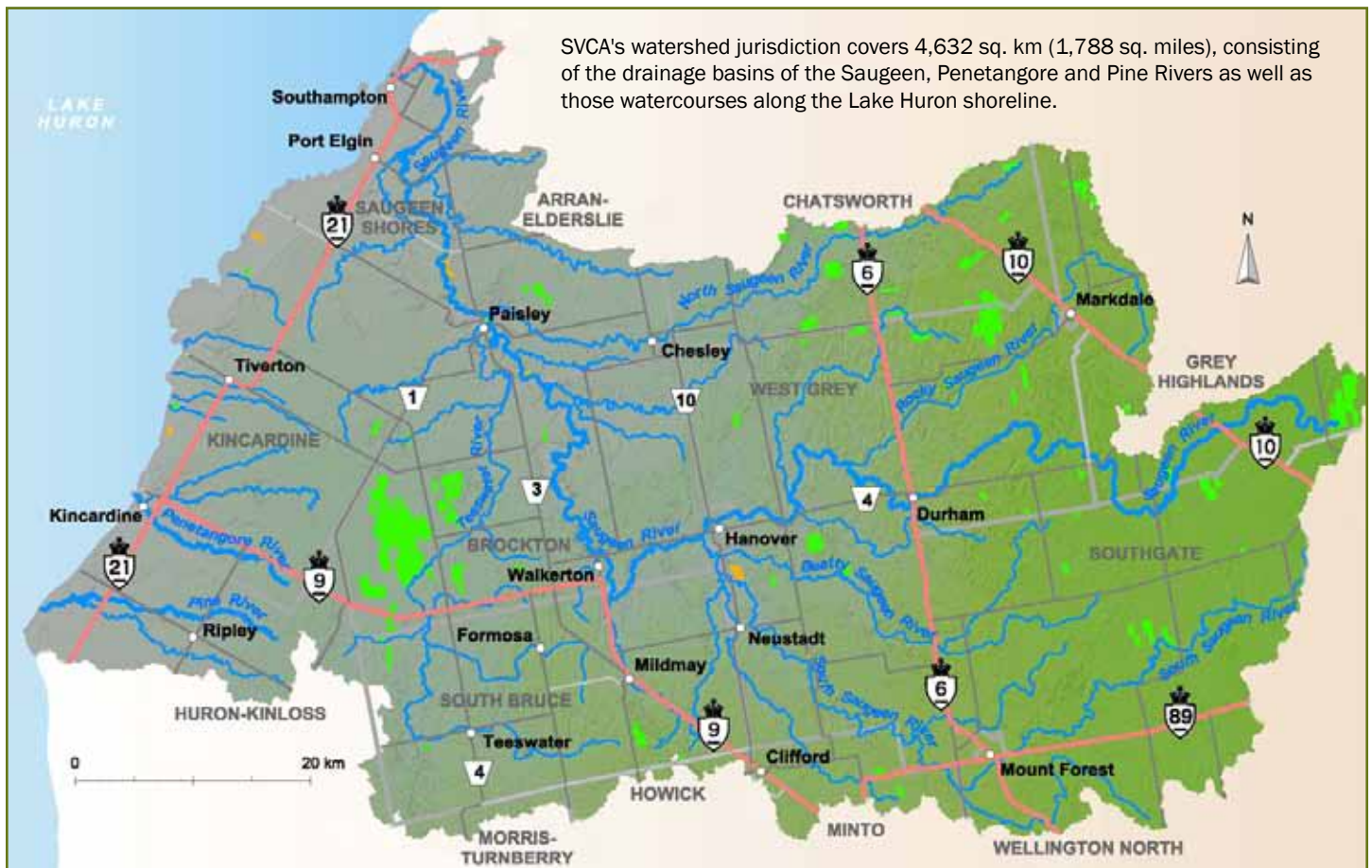
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Front Cover: Great Blue Heron nest by David Bishop



Water Management

SVCA provides ongoing maintenance on capital structures designed to protect life and property from flood and erosion hazards.

2017 Highlights



SVCA field staff **removed trees** along the Walkerton Dyke and the Kincardine Penetangore Slope Stability project.



A temporary **repair was made to a corroded stormwater outlet pipe** that conveys water to the Saugeen River through the base of the Walkerton dyke.



A large endeavour in 2017 was the **removal of the Markdale Dam** (right), in the Village of Markdale on Armstrong Creek. The dam reservoir was transformed into a newly established natural stream channel with free-flowing water.

Staff organized the **planting of 200 trees and shrubs** along both sides of the creek. Staff, volunteers, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Municipality of Grey Highlands, Stewardship Grey Bruce, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund and the Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation provided financial assistance. Happy Trout, a chapter of Trout Unlimited Canada, and the Markdale Rotary Club were also key participants.

Before



After



Before and after photos showing the removal of the Markdale Dam on Armstrong Creek.



Flood Warning

Flooding has always been a concern on the Saugeen River and this past year was no exception. **A significant flood event occurred on June 23 and 24**, within the South Saugeen Watershed, unusual for that time of year. It was the first time the highest flow of the year occurred in the month of June, as indicated by five of SVCA's monitoring stations.

The flood resulted from 149 mm of rain falling mostly within a five-hour period. The water level at the Mount Forest stream gauge station was the **highest since the gauge became operational in 1985**. The flood exceeded a 1 in 200-year event. Numerous municipal roads were flooded and/or damaged, and many rural properties were affected.

Late in 2017, new water resources software was acquired for the **flood forecasting system**, coinciding with SVCA joining a **Southwest Ontario WISKI hub** (Water Information System Kisters), in partnership with six other Conservation Authorities. This new stream flow and weather data collection and analysis system will gradually become operational in 2018, and will replace outdated software.

In November, staff assisted with an **Emergency Management Training Exercise** for the Town of Hanover which focussed on emergency measures during a flood event.

Numbers



- 3 Presentations
- 2 Workshops Attended
- 5 Flood Messages issued

Affiliates

Conservation Ontario
MNR (Surface Water Monitoring Centre)
SW Ontario Flood Forecast Alliance

Drinking Water Source Protection

The jurisdiction of this Drinking Water Source Protection program includes the watersheds of Saugeen and Grey Sauble Conservation Authorities as well as the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula.

2017 Highlights

💧 An **Open House** was held for realtors at the Grey Sauble Conservation office to learn about Land Use Planning. Presentations were also made by Drinking Water Source Protection staff.

💧 In April, CAOs, Clerks, Planners and CBOs met at a **Municipal Risk Management Implementation Planning Meeting** to discuss how to fund Part IV Responsibilities, Official Plan Updates and Septic Inspections.

💧 A study was completed on the Ripley and Point Clark Well Technical Work, which included a delineation for the Wellhead Protection Area (a new well). An **Open House** was also held. The amended Source Protection Plan was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change on May 31st for review and approval.

💧 **Justine Lunt was hired as the new Source Protection Supervisor/Risk Management Inspector.**

💧 **Angela Newman was appointed as the new Health Sector Representative** for the Drinking Water Source Protection Committee for the local source protection planning region.

💧 Grey Sauble Conservation staff partnered with five landowners to **plant 5,400 trees** along the Sauble River.



Drinking Water Source Protection is about protecting local municipal drinking water sources from both quality and quantity threats, to ensure clean water for all of us.

Stewardship in the Source Protection Region

💧 Desboro and Tara 4-H leaders, members of the Desboro Potato and Beef Calf Clubs volunteered to plant **80 red maple trees** in Tara. This is part of a stewardship initiative to improve water quality in the Upper Sauble River. Funding for this project was made available through the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change's Great Lakes Guardian Fund and Stewardship Grey Bruce.

💧 GSCA staff worked with a landowner to install **1,156 meters of fencing to prevent cattle from accessing a 700 meter stretch of the Upper Sauble River**. By partnering with Alternate Land Use Services (ALUS), this landowner, who took 5 ha (13 acres) out of pasture, is eligible for an annual payment.

💧 A **First Responders Guide** was sent to fire departments that serve areas near municipal drinking water systems/drinking water protection zones. A copy of the guide and factsheet was also sent to CAOs and clerks across the Source Protection Region. Staff also started conducting training sessions with fire departments.

Numbers



- 2 Press releases
- 29 Meetings attended
- 3 Workshops organized
- 144 Mail-outs
- 2 Publications produced
- 15 Meetings hosted

A Source Protection Committee of local representatives oversees this program.





Hands-On Environmental Projects

Stewardship

Staff is continually involved with stewardship activities to ensure the health and well-being of the watershed in which we live, work and play. These hands-on efforts depend on the commitment and dedication of local volunteers, groups, organizations and sponsors to make them happen.

Phragmites Information Workshop

Staff organized a full day information seminar about the invasive *Phragmites australis*, which has taken over many locations along the Lake Huron shoreline as well as other wetland areas throughout the watershed. The day was very successful with 70 participants in attendance.

Wonders of Wetlands

This was the third year that Enbridge supported the **Wonders of Wetland program** at Bruce Dale Conservation Area, for **70 elementary students from Paisley and Chepstow schools**.

Grey Bruce Sustainability Network (GBSusNet)

Saugeen Conservation partnered with GBSusNet on the implementation of **educational units entitled CareerWORKS**, sponsored by RBC's Bluewater Fund. CareerWORKS consists of a series of educational pieces, namely; WaterWORKS, EnergyWORKS, FoodWORKS, and ClimateWORKS.

A total of 230 students attended the WaterWORKS event to raise awareness about water resources, climate change, soil health and careers in a related field.

Youth Expo 2017

Staff hosted the **Youth Expo** again this year, free to youth ages 10 to 17. This program offers a variety of outdoor activities ranging from archery to aquatic studies, fishing, hiking, etc. A total of 15 adult volunteers were involved and 67 youth at the Sydenham Sportsmen's Club near Owen Sound. Other partners included Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Sydenham Sportsmen's Association, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and Stewardship Grey Bruce.

"Environmental stewardship is the responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices" *Aldo Leopold*

TD Friends of the Environment Tree Days

TD Friends of the Environment Tree Days celebrated their **fourth year planting trees** in the Town of Walkerton. Approximately **300 trees and shrubs were planted** this past year. Staff was also successful in their application to extend the TD FEF program to include Port Elgin, where an **additional 150 trees and shrubs were planted**.

Bruce Grey Federation of Agriculture Politicians Day

Staff attended the **Grey and Bruce Federation of Agriculture's 'Politicians Day'** in late March, where a brief overview was provided on SVCA's involvement and accomplishments with the agricultural community.

Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation(LHCCC)

Everyone at the LHCCC mourned the loss of an incredible individual in January of 2017; Geoff Peach, Co-Founder and Coastal Resources Advisor to the Centre. Geoff was a wealth of knowledge and dedicated to conservation initiatives pertaining to Lake Huron and the Great Lakes in general. He will be sorely missed.

The LHCCC and SVCA, with funding from Enbridge and the National Wetland Conservation Fund, were instrumental in the continued **removal of the invasive *Phragmites australis*** plant from areas along the Lake Huron shoreline, specifically at Brucedale Conservation Area (right). This invasive plant is extremely aggressive and has taken over many shoreline areas, replacing valuable native species.

Top right: Staff manually removing phragmites at Brucedale Conservation Area.

Lower right: An amphibious machine called a Truxor was used to mechanically cut *Phragmites* from the shoreline.

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission – Lake Huron and Saugeen Watershed Workshop

Staff was involved with the **Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC)** workshop, held in Kincardine. The workshop involved environmental organizations and First Nations around Lake Huron, as well as those who review industry compliances related to the operations of Bruce Power with respect to licencing.

Phragmites Lunch & Learn

The SVCA, in partnership with the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation and Enbridge, hosted a very successful **'Lunch and Learn'** in July at Brucedale Conservation Area. The session featured guest speaker Dr. Janice Gilbert speaking on the invasive *Phragmites australis*. In attendance were seasonal campers, as well as Kincardine staff and shoreline residents.





Penetangore Watershed Group

This group is involved with the planting of **3,500 trees** every year! In addition, the group implements **Tall Tree and Shade Tree initiatives** in the Municipality of Kincardine with support from Bruce Power. A total of 60 students from Kincardine District SS as well as 10 volunteers assisted with the planting of trees along Kincardine Creek.

Pine River Watershed Initiative Network (PRWIN)

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), the SVCA and the PRWIN assisted landowners with **soil conservation measures**. This past year, PRWIN was also involved with the **planting of 15,000 trees**.

Numbers



370	Students involved in stewardship endeavours
240	Volunteers involved in stewardship projects
1,500	Trees planted by SVCA
7	Events
22	Presentations
14	Workshops
38	Meetings
4	Conferences
2	Radio interviews

Affiliates

Brockton Emergency Management	Ontario Envirothon - Forests Ontario
Brockton Fisheries Task Force	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry
Bruce County Federation of Agriculture	Ontario Power Generation
Grey County Federation of Agriculture	Penetangore Watershed Group
Happy Trout, Chapter of Trout Unlimited Canada	Pine River Watershed Initiative Network
Healthy Lake Huron - South East Lake	RBC's Bluewater Fund
Huron Technical Working Group	Saugeen River Fisheries Task Force
Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation	SaugGreen
Lake Huron Fishing Club	Stewardship Grey Bruce
Markdale Rotary Club	Sydenham Sportsmen's Association
National Wetland Conservation Fund	Walkerton Rotary Club
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	
Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change	

Partners



Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Pêches et Océans Canada



Agricultural Stewardship

Saugeen Conservation works with local and provincial agricultural groups, organizations and agencies in furthering the work of stewardship.

Coffee, Crops & Donuts

SVCA continued to work with **16 farmers and eight Ag industry partners to host farmer-led workshops on soil conservation**. Topics ranged from identifying and monitoring soil health to pest and disease management.

Staff worked with six farmers on the **Demonstration Plot Project**, focussing on inter-seeding, planting green, manure applications and feed quality.

The Dirt on Phosphorus

The SVCA and Maitland Valley Conservation hosted a conference entitled **“The Dirt on Phosphorus”**. The all-day event included classroom sessions and field trips about nutrient management and phosphorus research in Ontario. A total of 98 participants attended.



The last Coffee, Crops and Donuts workshop of the year, on December 15th, was on conservation farming with horses. Approximately 35 participants attended at the Belmore Community Centre.

Cover Crop Incentive Program

The SVCA had the opportunity to deliver a second year of the **Cover Crop Incentive Program** to support farmers interested in cover crops.

Community Outreach

Staff represented the SVCA at the Ontario **Soil Network, and the Bruce County Soil and Crop Committee**. They attended meetings and sponsored Ag events.

Education Outreach

Staff built an augmented **reality sandbox** for exploring the concept of water movement over land and to learn about the effects of flooding and erosion. Stewardship principles and practices were also demonstrated.



Affiliates

Agronomy Advantage, Dundalk
Bogle Pass Angus, Holstein
Bruce County Plowmen's Association
Brussels Agri-Service
D&I Wattam, Wingham
Dave Gowan, Tara
Environmental Tillage Systems
Germar Farms, Mildmay
Grey Ag Services, Markdale
Grey Bruce Sustainability Network, Walkerton
Harry Biermans, Paisley
Highland Custom Farming, Grey Highlands
Hill & Hill Farms, Varna
Lewis Land and Stock, Holstein
Local Farmers

Lystek, Dundalk
Maitland Conservation
Mapleseed, Lindsay
North Wellington Co-op, Mount Forest
Ontario Biomass Producers Association
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
Parrish and Heimbecker, Goderich
Paul Legge, Paisley
Peter Johnson, Real Agriculture
Peter Kotzef, Paisley
Robert DeBrabandere, Paisley
Sprucedale Agromart, Hanover
Schaus Land and Cattle Company, Elmwood
Thomas Lennox, Deemerton

Numbers



- 10 Cover Crop Incentive Program participants
- 10 Coffee, Crops & Donut sessions involving 266 farmers
- 748 Ha (1848 acres) of farmland protected in cover crops through the Ag Outreach program
- 100 High school students and 300 elementary students were 'Soil Health Certified' by the Ag Outreach Program

Environmental Planning and Regulations

1 A new comprehensive **Environmental Planning and Regulations Policies Manual** was approved. This document is a step toward transparency, consistency, and local awareness on the role of SVCA's Environmental Planning and Regulations Department.

2 The implementation of a **Two Zone Floodplain Policy Area** in the **Village of Teeswater** was made possible through updated floodplain mapping by the Municipality of South Bruce and SVCA.

3 Staff followed up on two charges laid against landowners in 2016. The landowners **restored the site** to the satisfaction of the SVCA. As a result, charges were withdrawn.

4 Staff reviewed the Grey County, Huron County, and initial stages of the Wellington County **Natural Heritage System Studies**. They also began the review process of the new Grey County Official Plan, Municipality of South Bruce Official Plan, and Township of Huron-Kinloss Zoning By-law.

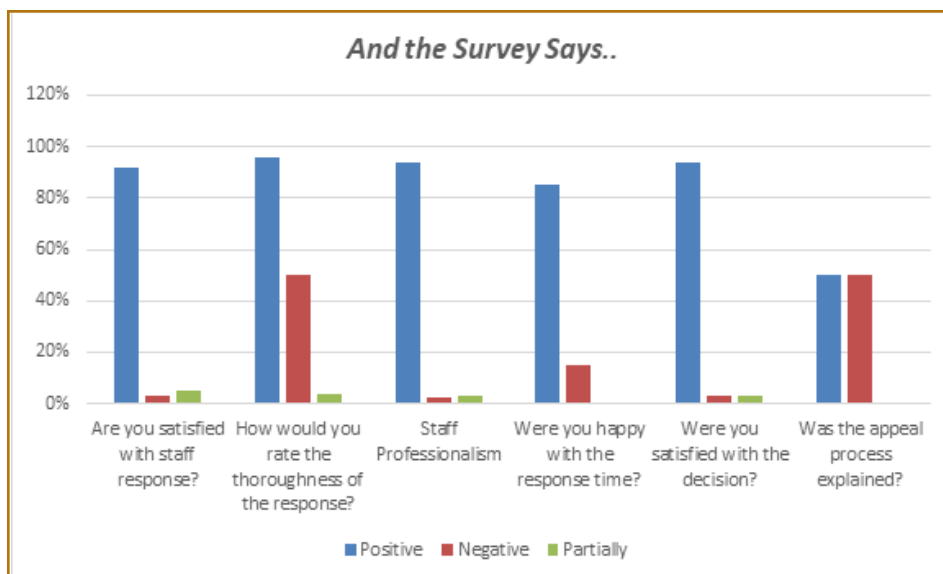


Graph showing the trend associated with general enquiries.

5 A new **file management system** is being created to enhance efficiency in this department. This system will represent a massive step forward for the department into 2018.

6 Staff implemented a **'within 5 business days response required'** process for 'rush' legal inquiries. In many cases, responses took less than a day.

7 SVCA continues to use the **Drainage Act Review Team Protocol (DART)**, to ensure that both the Conservation Authorities Act and the Drainage Act work in concert. New drains also continued to be reviewed.



In 2015, an anonymous customer service survey was made available for those who received a permit. Results over the past three years are shown above.

Numbers



238	Development permits issued
118	Violations of Regulation 169/06 investigated
66	Enforcement matters resolved
402	Planning Act comments issued - 99.75% submitted on time
1200	Files processed in 2017
0	Charges laid associated with Violations of Ontario Regulation 169/06, as amended, in 2017
4	Section 28 Hearings held by the SVCA
2	Permit denials by SVCA
0	Decisions, or conditions of SVCA approval, appealed by proponents associated with Section 28 permission
1	Open House attended in Huron-Kinloss
133	Inquiries by legal firms processed in 2017; 99.2% processed on time
22	New municipal drains reviewed as well as 15 maintenance projects



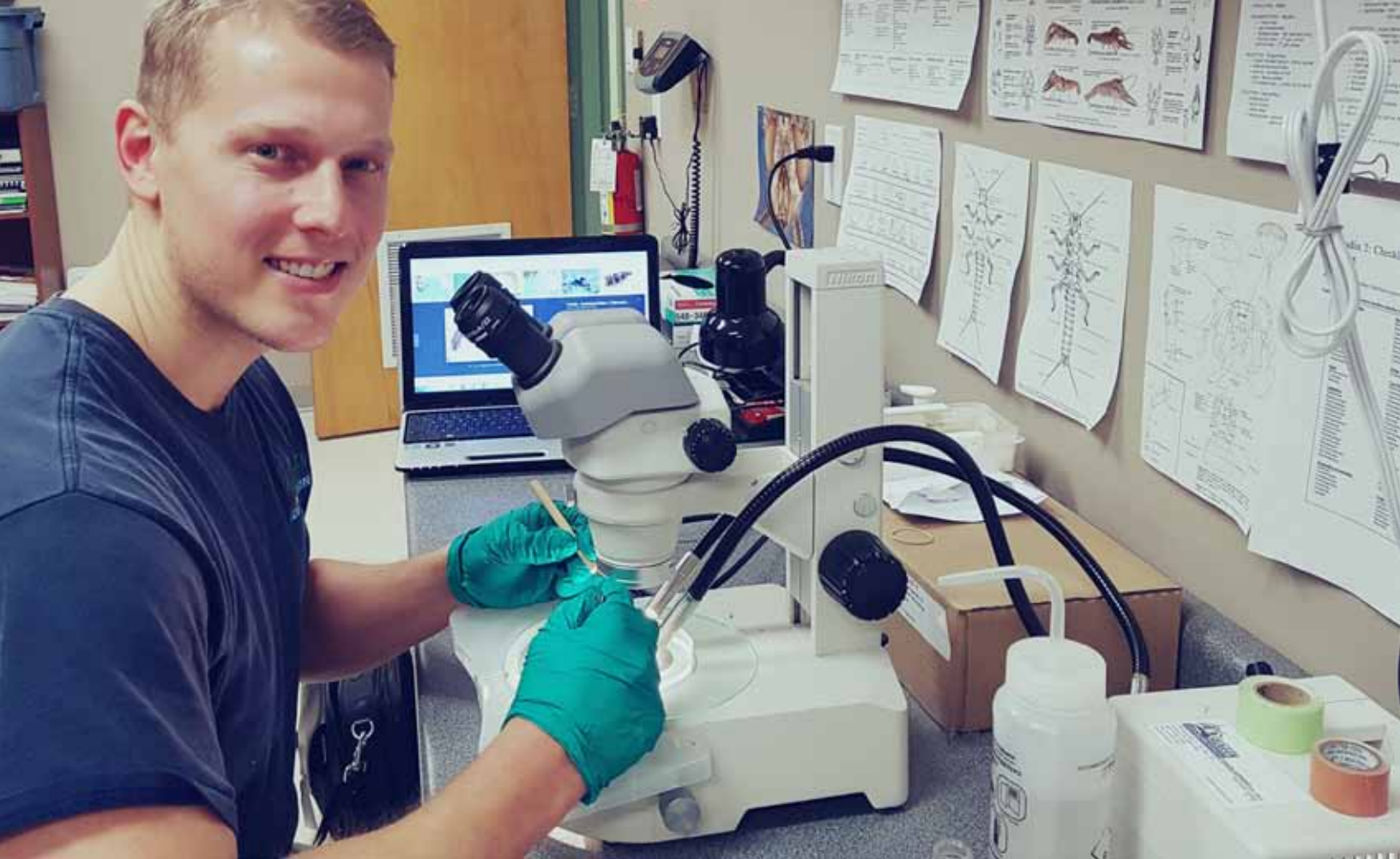
Culvert installation in Town of Chesley.

8 This department continued a winter **radio awareness campaign in 2017**. Watershed residents were reminded to contact SVCA in advance of proposed works. The campaign also served as an educational piece about how regulations fulfill one of the key mandates of Conservation Authorities; 'preventing loss of life and property damage from flood and erosion hazards'.

9 **Planning Services Agreements** clarify the SVCA's role in Planning Act comments. These agreements **are being renegotiated/negotiated** with all Member Municipalities involved with the Planning Act process.

Staff Attended the Following:

- Level 2 Provincial Offenses Act Training, a first-time course offered specifically for Conservation Authorities staff. New staff tools and knowledge of evidence collection, court document production, interview techniques etc., were acquired during this training
- Meetings with both the MNRF and MOECC on shoreline mapping and high lake levels
- DFO Drain Classification meetings to have additional drains classified by DFO and to help clarify maintenance needs
- Agricultural education events regarding stewardship and best management practices concerning soil health and conservation
- Two Conservation Authority Coastal Working Group meetings for Conservation Authorities with shoreline areas
- Meetings with area Drainage Superintendents and contractors concerning tile drainage challenges in the watershed
- Town of Hanover Mock Emergency training related to flooding
- SVCA's Agricultural Advisory Committee meetings
- Conservation Ontario's Section 28 Compliance Committee
- Community presentation in Belmore



Water Quality

Surface Water Sampling

Saugeen Conservation conducts **monthly surface water quality sampling at 29 sites** within the Saugeen and lake-fringe watersheds, during ice free periods. Sampling has occurred at some of these sites since the 1970s. Samples are **analyzed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC), and private laboratories for general chemistry, phosphorus, nitrates, metals, and *E. coli*.**

This data allows staff to detect changes in water quality, identify sources of pollution, and prioritize areas for protection and restoration. For example, one of these indicators is phosphorus, an element which contributes to algae growth in aquatic environments. In 2017 the average total phosphorus concentration **showed early signs of improvement.**

Sources of phosphorus include but are not limited to: runoff of household fertilizers, (soaps/cleaners, and faulty septic systems), agricultural runoff, industrial effluent. Algae blooms are harmful to aquatic organisms as they deplete oxygen, prevent the penetration of sunlight, and can contain toxins.

Groundwater Monitoring

Knowing how groundwater levels and quality changes from year-to-year assists the SVCA in making informed comments with regard to land use planning. Rain gauges that were previously installed at three well sites, with support from the MOECC, help monitor the relationship between precipitation and groundwater.

The SVCA **monitors 23 aquifers in 13 locations** throughout the watershed. Ten wells monitor bedrock aquifers, while thirteen monitor overburden aquifers, or aquifers located in loose soil, sand, or gravel overlying solid rock. A bedrock aquifer is an aquifer confined within bedrock layers. Nitrates and chloride are two of the main parameters measured.

Water level is logged hourly, while water quality samples are collected annually in the fall. (Any exceedances of the Ontario Drinking Water Standards are reported to municipalities and the local Health Unit for follow-up.) This program is supported by funds from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC).

Photo above: Shaun Anthony, Water Quality Specialist, identifies organisms taken from local waterways.

Biomonitoring

Benthic invertebrates (i.e. bottom dwelling organisms), **are collected at surface water sampling sites across the watershed annually**. These organisms are excellent indicators of water quality due to their sensitivity to pollution. The presence or absence of different species can indicate a great deal about habitat quality.

Results indicate that the **benthos have changed in some locations**, favouring those more tolerant of polluted conditions. Staff will continue to closely monitor these organisms and investigate possible causes of water quality deterioration.

Healthy Lake Huron

Since 2011, the SVCA, neighbouring Conservation Authorities, government agencies and NGOs, have worked together **to protect and improve overall water quality along the southeast shores of Lake Huron**. SVCA has been collecting monthly baseline and storm-event samples from the South Pine River in Huron-Kinloss.

Last year SVCA **collected 16 baseline and 49 storm-event samples**. This data will be used in a computer-based model to allow SVCA to better understand and predict how sediments and pollutants move from land to watercourses.

Restoration

The SVCA, in partnership with the Grey Bruce Sustainability Network, hosted a **'Restoration Day'** at Riverstone Retreat, near Durham. Attendees learned the basics of bank stabilization and erosion control by building a "wing-deflector" (directing water away from an eroding bank), and "fascines" (rope-shaped bundles of live cuttings, lashed together with twine).



Staff welcomed exchange student Denise Inman from Mexico as part of the Walkerton Rotary Club Exchange Program. Denise worked with Water Quality Specialist, Shaun Anthony, to learn about water quality programs in Ontario.

Staff was also involved at Fairy Lake in Southampton to shore **up eroding banks and control stormwater runoff**. Cleared debris and fallen trees from an inlet channel were used to protect the "toe" of the banks from erosion. A native-plants garden with a series of "step-pools" was also constructed to hold back and filter pollutants in stormwater runoff.

Affiliates

Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund
Grey Bruce Sustainability Network
Healthy Lake Huron Technical Working Committee
Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network
Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network
SauGreen
Town of Saugeen Shores

Numbers



- 232 Water samples taken at 29 surface water sampling sites
- 26 Water samples taken from 20 groundwater monitoring wells
- 35 Benthic invertebrate samples taken at 15 sampling sites (OBBN)
- 65 Healthy Lake Huron (rural stormwater) samples taken
- 9 Workshops
- 23 Meetings and conference calls
- 3 Presentations
- 9 Outreach engagements
- 5 Webinars

Partners





Forestry

2017 Highlights

Plantation Thinning

There were **three plantation thinnings** organized in 2017. The total revenue generated was \$190,000.

Hazard Tree Removal Program

Portions of the Mildmay-Carrick and Allan Park trail systems were inspected and potentially hazardous trees removed.

Tree Marking

Tree marking on SVCA lands was carried out by forestry staff and a private contractor. The marking resulted in **\$300,327 in harvest revenue**.

Emerald Ash Borer

The Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area was **monitored for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** and its presence was confirmed. Removal of the trees will be difficult, especially within the camping park. Staff are consulting with arborists to determine the scope and cost of tree removal.

EAB Control

Staff assisted the Town of Saugeen Shores with the **identification and marking of ash trees within their municipality** as well as other hazardous trees. The evaluation of contractor bids and supervision of the tree removal process was completed. These efforts resulted in revenue of \$14,776.

Marketing and Promotion

The Grey Bruce Forestry Service was promoted in a variety of ways. Displays were prepared and staffed at the following events:

- Chesley Agri-fair
- Welbeck Wood Show
- Grey Bruce Woodlot Conference
- Holstein Maplefest
- Tree planting, MFTIP and EAB workshops



Numbers



\$300,327 Revenue generated by forest product sales.
Budgeted revenue for the year was \$210,000, resulting in a surplus of \$90,327

93 Ha (232 acres) of SVCA forests marked in 2017

118,600 Seedlings ordered in the spring of 2017. Of this total, over the counter sales amounted to 54,900 trees for 33 landowners

63,700 Trees planted by the SVCA for 16 landowners with funding from the 50 Million Tree Program

280 Landscape trees provided to 5 landowners and municipalities

6,719 Trees and shrubs sold during the 13th Annual Arbour Day Tree Sale in April

22 Landowners involved with the Emerald Ash Borer control program, resulting in the treatment of 37 ash trees

35 Landowners assisted by staff in the preparation of new or renewed Managed Forest Tax Incentive Plans (MFTIP), involving a total of 2,287 acres (953 ha)



Events and Shows Attended

Annual MNRF Somerville Stock Viewing
Brockton Horticulturalists
Bruce Grey Forest Festival
Community Forest Managers Meeting
EAB Working Group Meeting
Forests Ontario - AGM
Forests Ontario - Post Plant Meeting
Forest Health Review
FSC Southern Ontario Certification
Greenock Members Tour
Grey Bruce Woodlot Conference
OFAH Zone H

Bruce Grey Woodlands Association
Emerald Ash Borer Working Group
Forests Ontario
Ontario Invasive Plant Council
Ontario Professional Foresters Association
Ontario Woodlot Association
Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association
School Groups
Town of Saugeen Shores

Projects

Financial Ecological Assessment of
Forests for Bruce Power
TD FEF Walkerton and Port Elgin Tree
Planting

Affiliates

Bruce Grey Forest Festival



Photo by Tim Gow



Conservation Areas & Lands

Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area

An **Open House** was held on May 28th. Staff was on hand to provide tours and answer questions.

Two **ford-type stream crossings** were **constructed** by staff to provide a safe and environmentally friendly way for horseback riders to **cross streams and creeks**. This pilot project is intended to be an alternative to more costly bridges.

An additional **eight corrals** were constructed at four campsites at the Campbell Horse Campground.

In November, the water system was extended to an **additional 30 camping sites in the horse campground**.

A children's **splash pad** was constructed with assistance from Emke Schaab Climate Care (Hanover and Walkerton), as well as Dave Hawkins Line Service (Mildmay), and the seasonal campers.

Staff, volunteers and the Bruce County Innovation Program assisted in the **construction of two pedestrian bridges** along one of the main trails.



Two new horse-crossing bridges were constructed by members of the Chesley Saddle Club, volunteers and staff.

McBeath Conservation Area

The laneway at this property was improved to allow service vehicles access to the rear of the property. This park is accessible (for visitors), by canoe only.

Brucedale Conservation Area

In August, an **amphibious cutting machine** called a **Truxor** was employed to remove invasive *Phragmites* from the shore area. Almost all the invasive plants were removed resulting in a remarkable change to the viewscape.

Durham Conservation Area

An **Open House** was held on June 4th. This provided the public with an opportunity to view the park, check out the features and ask staff questions about the camping experiences available.

Horse Friends of Saugeen Bluffs

A new club called **Horse Friends of Saugeen Bluffs** was formed by local equestrians to foster promotion and further development of the horse camp and trail riding experience. This group **assisted with the construction of two new bridges, park promotion, trail maintenance and fundraising events**.



Telfer Wegg

Changes & Improvements

• A new trail system was developed at Stoney Island Conservation Area as part of the Canada 150 Celebrations.

• In April the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) stocked fish at Allan Park and Bell's Lake Conservation Areas and Durham Conservation Area below McGowan Falls.

The species and numbers are as follows: Allan Park 2,000 Brown Trout; Bell's Lake 3,500 Brook Trout and, Durham 1,000 Brook Trout.

All fish are 28 months old with an average weight of 1lb plus. The fish are stocked at no cost to the Authority.

Land Donations

SVCA was extremely fortunate to be the recipient of two **significant property donations**, courtesy of the Woods Family and Mr. Brian Powers. A total of 99 ha (245 acres), of forested land and important wetlands are permanently protected for future generations.

Numbers



10,383 Campers at Brucedale Conservation Area

32,487 Campers at Durham Conservation Area

33,505 Campers at Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area

2 Open Houses

Partners, Groups, Volunteers and Agencies

Bruce County Campers
Bruce County Tourism
Bruce County Innovation Program
Chesley Saddle Club
Conservation Ontario
Enbridge Inc.
Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund
Grey County Tourism
Horse Friends of Saugeen Bluffs
Kincardine Ski Club
Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry

Ontario Steelheader's Association
RT07 (Tourism Grey, Bruce, Simcoe)
Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village
Saugeen Bluffs and Durham Seasonal Campers
Town of Saugeen Shores
Trails Ontario
Canada Summer Jobs Program

Meetings Attended

Horse Friends of Saugeen Bluffs
Saugeen Bluffs Maple Syrup Committee



Communication is the act of transferring information. It may be done vocally, written (using printed or digital media such as books, magazines, websites or emails), or visually (using photos, maps, charts or graphs).

Communications

Combining Tourism and the Environment

The Greenock Swamp, the largest single forested wetland in Southern Ontario, steeped in culture, history and environmental importance, was the focus of a **new tourism product** in 2017, entitled **'Legends of the Great Swamp'**.

The tours were organized by staff with input from the local community. Regional Tourism Organization 7 assisted with seed monies. When the tours were advertised, bookings flooded in. Not only did staff host the two planned tours, but four additional tours were accommodated due to demand.

Saugeen Bluffs Marketing Plan

This Department continued to implement recommendations outlined in the 2016 Saugeen Bluffs Marketing Plan.

Staff coordinated volunteers to assist with the following:

- **Spring workbee**
- **Open House**
- **Trail development**
- **Construction of pedestrian bridges**
- **Construction of horse bridges**
- **Displays**

Social Media Policy

According to Higher Ed Marketing Journal, there are almost **3 billion social media users worldwide**. Facebook, for example, has over 2 billion users, 88% of those between the ages of 18 – 29. Twitter is next with 328 million users. Snapchat is leading the way in allowing users to share content for a limited time. Instagram (owned by Facebook) is hugely popular among younger generations with 59% of users in the 18 – 29 age brackets. Instagram now has 250 million daily users!

In response to the growing popularity of social media as a communications tool, a **Social Media Policy** was developed in 2017.



Two new tours were developed as part of a new culture/environmental promotion. 'Legends of the Great Swamp' attracted over 250 participants last summer.

Numbers



Radio/Television/Print

- 12 Press releases
- 10 Weeks of radio advertising for events, functions and programming
- 12 Display ads

Functions/Events

- 5 Seminars / workshops attended
- 48 Meetings
- 17 Presentations and hikes
- 1 Evening Conservation Tours (SVCA /SVCF staff & Members)
- 1 Volunteer appreciation evening
- 1 Volunteer/Sponsor Recognition ceremony
- 3 SVCA/SVCF major events, (11,000 combined attendance)
- 16 Shows, events and fairs attended by SVCA/SVCF, organized by others
- 2 Campground Open Houses
- 1 River Clean-up Operation
- 1 Memorial Tree Ceremony

Publications & Promotions

- 6,500 Campground Guidebooks
- 8,000 Produced and distributed (flyers, placemats, coupons, etc.)
- 1 Newsletter (Green Side Up)
- 1 Annual Report (350 copies)
- 12 Advertisements in tourism publications
- 3 Trade show displays



Shows

Staff attended two major promotional shows, namely the **Toronto Spring Camping and RV Show** to promote the campgrounds and the **Mane Event Equine Show** in London to promote horse camping at Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area. Both shows were well attended.

Staff also dedicated a great deal of time attending shows and events throughout the watershed to promote SVCA's programs, parks and services. It's incredibly important to interact one-on-one with the public and to establish an **active presence in the watershed.**



Affiliates

Bruce County Innovation Program
Community Living (Walkerton and District)
Conservation Ontario
Grey Bruce Sustainability Network
Grey Sauble Conservation
Healthy Lake Huron
Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation
Lake Huron Fishing Club
Maitland Valley Conservation
Watershed Media
Member Municipalities
Ontario Driftboat Guides

Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Ontario Power Generation
RT07 (Tourism Grey, Bruce, Simcoe)
Saugeen Bluffs Seasonal Campers
Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation
Grey Bruce Tourism Association
Brockton Fisheries Task Force
Watershed Groups and Organizations
Watershed Schools



Conservation Education

The Natural Way to Learn

The goal of the conservation education program is “to assist watershed residents in developing an awareness of, and the knowledge, skills and commitment required, to make informed decisions and constructive actions concerning the wise use of our natural resources.”

2017 Highlights

Enbridge sponsored the Wonders of Wetlands program again in 2017. This one-day program focusses on the importance of coastal wetlands to over 75 grade 4 students and takes place at Brucedale Conservation Area. Students learn about the importance of wetlands and wildlife habitat. This program complements Enbridge’s on-going support for the removal of *Phragmites*.

This year marked the **sixth anniversary of The World of Trees program** presented in cooperation with Grey Sauble Conservation Authority’s Arboretum Alliance. The program is delivered over two days to Owen Sound area grade 3 students and focusses on trees and how they grow. Students also plant additional trees at the Arboretum during the program.

The WREN Program

A cooperative effort between Saugeen and Grey Sauble Conservation, this program offers schools throughout Grey, Bruce, Wellington and Huron Counties **40 different hands-on curriculum based studies**.

Each unit investigates interactions within ecosystems, biodiversity, sustainability, and the responsibility of everyone to protect and conserve our natural environment.

Flood Waters & You Program

This is a hands-on program focussed on **flooding and cold-water safety**. It is offered free of charge to watershed elementary schools and community youth groups.

The DEER Program

Sponsored by Bruce Power, **over 30 different curriculum based programs** are available to schools in the Bluewater District and Bruce Grey Catholic District School Boards, grades 2 to 12. These full day, hands-on programs take place at the Bruce Power Visitors' Centre, Inglis Falls and Sulphur Spring Conservation Areas.

Earth Week Program

Fully sponsored by Enbridge, these in-school programs were first developed in 2007 in response to a growing interest in Earth Week celebrations. **Six different curriculum based presentations** offer students the chance to learn about local ecosystems and how we all play a role in caring for the planet.

Wild Encounters Nature Day Camp

This week-long camp is a cooperative effort between Hanover Recreation Department and Saugeen Conservation. Its goal is to **get kids involved in the outdoors**, having fun, and learning about conservation and the environment.

The Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival

This Festival is held each May for grade 4 students in Grey and Bruce and features **46 different curriculum based, hands-on demonstrations and activities** focussed on water.

Youth Expo

This program is geared to **youth aged 9 to 16** and offers a wide variety of **outdoor activities** from fishing and hiking, archery, bird watching and more. The 11th annual Expo was held in June at the Sydenham Sportsmen's Club and is hosted by several organizations interested in **offering youth the opportunity to explore the outdoors**.

Bruce Grey Forest Festival

Initiated in 2010 by Saugeen Conservation, this Festival was the second of its kind in the province. Grade 7 students from Grey and Bruce participate in **35 hands-on curriculum based activities**, focussed on forests. This year's three-day festival took place in early October at Allan Park Conservation Area.

Numbers



379	Presentations
346	Classes
58	Education programs

Participating Students

6,145	Bluewater School Board
1,484	Bruce Grey Catholic School Board
498	Community Youth Groups
575	Other Groups

Participating Students (Programs)

2,200	WREN
2,260	DEER
75	Floodwaters & You
53	Conservation Badge
295	Summer Programs
1,217	Earthweek
1,527	Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival
1,000	Bruce Grey Forest Festival
75	Youth Expo

Our Partners



Wellington Catholic
District School Board
We Have Faith in Education



Upper Grand
District School Board



Saugeen
Valley
Conservation
Foundation



Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation

The Communications Department works hand-in-hand with the Foundation and its volunteers. Foundation programs and events accomplish a number of objectives, such as public awareness, increased profile and fundraising.

Fundraising Events

The Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation was established in 1973 and is the fundraising arm of Saugeen Conservation. Its Board of Directors consists of three staff and 10 keen individuals from across the watershed who have a sincere interest and dedication to conservation. Direction for fundraising projects is provided by Saugeen Conservation.

2017 Highlights

The Saugeen Bluffs Maple Syrup Festival

This festival has been ongoing since 1969. Between 5,000 – 7,000 people attend this event, the largest of its kind in Grey and Bruce Counties!



Above: Dana Bernier with Pioneer Popcorn is a huge hit with visitors and attends SVCF events on a regular basis.

Christmas in the Country

This festive event is held at Sulphur Spring Conservation Area. Tree-lined pathways are adorned with **hundreds of candle jar lanterns** to set the mood of this **one-of-a-kind event**. Trees and buildings throughout the park are decorated with thousands of lights and activities are featured in every building on the grounds. Between 5,000 – 7,000 people attend this unique event.

Memorial Grove Ceremony

The Foundation organizes a special ceremony for families and friends of those who have had trees planted in their memory. This annual function is **attended by hundreds** of people and is very meaningful for all involved.



Right: Over 600 people attended SVCF's Annual Memorial Grove Ceremony.

Conservation Dinner

In October, the Foundation held the **Wine & Wise Things Dinner and Auction**. It was a great evening of fun and entertainment.

Funding Projects in 2017

Markdale Dam Removal

The Foundation provided monetary **support toward the removal of the Markdale Dam** and the rehabilitation of the channel on Armstrong Creek in the Village of Markdale.

Wildlife Centre

The Foundation has adopted a new project involving the construction of a new Wildlife Centre at Sulphur Spring Conservation Area. The current structure, which houses domestic birds, is in a state of disrepair. The **new facility will focus on housing animals that have been rehabilitated** but cannot be released into the wild. Education and awareness will be a big part of the new facility.

Conservation Area Improvements

Monies were directed to improvements at **Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area** including the construction of a new **splash pad**.



Numbers



276	Active volunteers
11,500	People attended Foundation events throughout the year
1	Evening Conservation Tour
121	Memorial Grove trees planted
3	Major events





Above: Rick Rowbotham, Field Services Coordinator, clears snow in preparation for the Saugeen Bluffs Maple Syrup Festival.

Behind the Scenes

The individuals behind the scenes play an integral role to any organization. They **work with virtually every department** to ensure that projects run smoothly, finances are looked after, mapping is updated and computers and software are current.

The **administration and finance staff**, for example, are responsible for the day-to-day finances, including billing, invoices, payables, and so much more. They are also available to answer phones, direct calls and forward messages. These staff function

as the **front lines** of this organization, handling calls and providing information and direction to visitors.

The **maintenance staff**, as well, **assist in a multitude of duties**, each and every day. They look after capital projects, keep Conservation Areas well maintained, build and look after trails, repair fences, assist with tree planting, make repairs to Authority buildings, and so much more.

GIS staff work continuously in the quest to provide up-to-date mapping for staff, essential for the daily operations of the SVCA.

'Behind the scenes' staff are key to any organization to ensure the continued efficiency and operations of its programs and services.

Volunteers & Sponsors

Major Sponsors (over \$1,000 cash or In-kind)

Brian Powers, Tiverton
Bruce Power, Tiverton
Community Foundation Grey Bruce
Dave Hawkins Line Service, Mildmay
Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Emke Schaab Climate Care, Hanover and Walkerton
Enbridge Inc.
Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund, MOECC
Grey Bruce Sustainability Network
GSS Engineering, Owen Sound
John Sutherland and Sons, Guelph
Lake Huron Fishing Club
Markdale Rotary Club
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Ontario Power Generation
Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association
RBC Bluewater Fund
Stewardship Grey Bruce
TD Friends of the Environment
Walkerton Rotary Club
The Woods Family, Dundas

Major Event Sponsors (over \$1,000 cash or in-kind)

Bruce Power, Tiverton
CRS, Walkerton
Grant's Your Independent Grocer, Hanover
K's Country Kitchen, Walkerton
Love's Sweetness Maple Syrup, Holstein
Town of Saugeen Shores
Ontario Power Generation, Tiverton
Pine River Watershed Initiative Network
Saugeen Shores Chamber of Commerce
Scotiabank, Hanover
The Post, Hanover
Trillium Mutual Insurance Company, Listowel

Major Volunteers - Groups and Organizations (over 100 hours)

1st Chesley Scouts
1st Hanover Scouts
Bruce County Campers
Bruce County Family Living Centre, Walkerton
Bruce County Trappers and Crappers
Chesley Saddle Club
Kincardine Ski Club
Ontario Steelheader's Association
Saugeen Bluffs Seasonal Campers
South Bruce Buckskinners
West Grey Police Department
West Grey Fire Department



Our Volunteers

Due to the Access to Information Act, we are unable to publish the individual names of all our incredible volunteers.

Both SVCA and the Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation are indebted to the over 300 volunteers who dedicate their time and efforts for the betterment of conservation!

Top right: Volunteers Wayne and Margaret Yeoman help construct a corral.

Centre Right: Bruce County Campers assist with projects at Saugeen Bluffs CA.

Bottom Right: SVCF's dedicated sponsors, John and Cheryl Grant with Grant's, Your Independent Grocer, pose for a photo with Catherine Dickison, Chair, SVCF, (left) and Ruby McCracken, Director, SVCF (right).





Members

Luke Charbonneau, Chair, *Town of Saugeen Shores*
 Dan Gieruszak, 1st Vice Chair, *Municipality of Brockton*
 Maureen Couture, 2nd Vice Chair, *Municipality of Kincardine*
 Kevin Eccles, Member at Large, *Municipality of West Grey*
 John Bell, *Municipality of West Grey*
 Robert Buckle, *Municipalities of Morris-Turnberry/South Bruce/Township of Howick*
 Mark Davis, *Municipality of Arran-Elderslie*
 Barbara Dobreen, *Township of Southgate*
 Brian Gamble, *Township of Chatsworth*
 Wilf Gamble, *Township of Huron-Kinloss*
 Stewart Halliday, *Municipality of Grey Highlands*
 Steve McCabe, *Township of Wellington North/Town of Minto*
 Sue Paterson, *Town of Hanover*
 Mike Smith, *Town of Saugeen Shores*
 Andrew White, *Municipality of Kincardine*

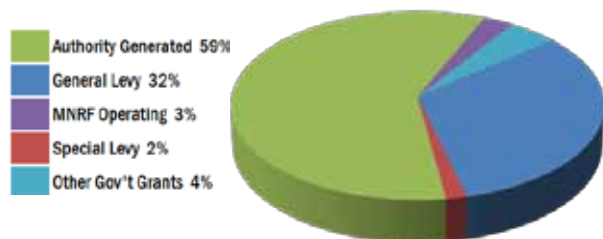


Directors

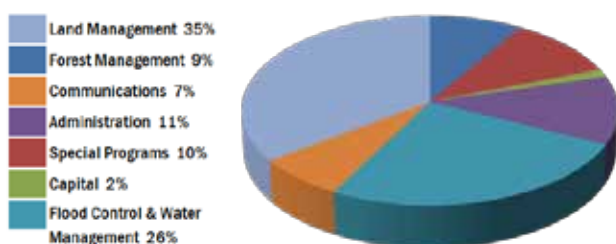
Catherine Dickson, Chair, *Walkerton*
 Ed Moric, 1st Vice Chair, *Durham*
 Carol Kraft 2nd Vice Chair, *Hanover*
 Laura Molson, Treasurer (staff)
 Shannon Wood, Secretary (staff)
 Wayne Brohman, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer (staff)
 Luke Charbonneau, (Chair, SVCA, ex-officio)
 Sherri Hachey, *Walkerton*
 Jack MacLeod, *Hanover*
 Ruby McCracken, *Hanover*
 Rick Pake, *Hanover*
 Jim & Barbara Potts, *Clifford*
 Gary Thomas, *Hanover*

2017 SVCA Financial Summary (unaudited)

Revenues



Expenses



Staff

Corporate Services

Wayne Brohman	General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer
Laura Molson	Manager, Accounting
Janice Hagan	Accounts Payable/Administrative Assistant
Dale Schaefer	Accounting Clerk

Communications

Shannon Wood	Manager, Communications
Nancy Griffin	Conservation Education Coordinator
Catherine Billings	Communications Assistant/Graphic Artist

Information Technology & GIS

Les McKay	Manager, Information Technology
Rene Kleinecke	GIS Coordinator
Lauriss Detzler	Scanning Clerk

Environmental Planning and Regulations

Erik Downing	Manager, Environmental Planning and Regulations
Matt Armstrong	Regulations Officer
Paul Elston	Regulations Officer
Michelle Gallant	Regulations Officer
Candace Hamm	Environmental Planning Coordinator
Michael Oberle	Environmental Planning Technician
Emily Payton	Environmental Planning Technician
Valerie Lamont	Resources Information Technician

Forestry

Jim Penner	Manager, Forestry
Donna Lacey	Forestry Technician

Land Management

Barry Skinn	Park Superintendent, Durham CA
Sandra Howe	Park Superintendent, Saugeen Bluffs CA
Caralynn Kamerman	Park Superintendent, Bruceale CA
Bruce Martin	Assistant Park Superintendent, Durham CA
Elijah Wilson	Assistant Park Superintendent, Saugeen Bluffs CA

Maintenance

Rick Rowbotham	Field Services Coordinator
Brian Oberle	Sulphur Spring CA Attendant

Water Management

Gary Senior	Sr. Manager, Flood Warning and Land Management
Jo-Anne Harbinson	Manager, Water Resources and Stewardship Services
Shaun Anthony	Water Quality Specialist
Tori Waugh	Agricultural Outreach Coordinator

Special Assistance Staff

Julie Henhoeffter and Community Living Support Worker, Melissa Henkusens

Drinking Water Source Protection Staff

Carl Seider	Project Manager
Justine Lunt	Program Supervisor
Nancy Guest	Administrative Assistant
Karen Gillan	Communications Specialist



Mission

To provide leadership through coordination of watershed planning, implementation of resource management programs, and the promotion of conservation awareness, in cooperation with others.



1078 Bruce Rd. 12, P.O. Box 150, Formosa ON N0G 1W0
 Tel. 519-367-3040 Fax 519-367-3041
 Email: publicinfo@svca.on.ca

www.svca.on.ca