



2025
BUDGET
COMPANION



Lake Simcoe Region
conservation authority

A Bit About Us and the Watershed 4

Corporate Services 8

- 10 Corporate Communications
- 11 Facility Management
- 12 Financial Management
- 13 Governance
- 14 Human Resource Management
- 15 Information Management

Ecological Management 16

- 18 Ecosystem Science and Monitoring
- 19 Forestry Services
- 20 Restoration and Regeneration

Education & Engagement 22

- 24 Community Programming
- 25 School Programming

Greenspace Services 26

- 28 Land Management
- 29 Land Securement

Planning & Development 30

- 32 Development Planning
- 33 Permitting and Enforcement

Water Risk Management 34

- 36 Flood Management and Warning
- 37 Source Water Protection
- 38 Water Management/Restoration
- 39 Water Science and Monitoring

Watershed Studies & Strategies 40

- 42 Climate Change
- 43 Research and Innovation
- 44 Watershed Planning

OUR VISION:
HEALTHY LAKE, HEALTHY
LAND, HEALTHY LIFE...FOR
GENERATIONS TO COME.



A BIT ABOUT US AND THE WATERSHED

The Lake Simcoe watershed, which is 3,400 square kilometres, sweeps across 20 municipalities, from the Oak Ridges Moraine in the south to the Oro Moraine in the north, through York and Durham Regions, Simcoe County and the cities of Kawartha Lakes, Barrie, and Orillia.

The Lake Simcoe watershed has been inhabited by Indigenous Peoples since creation. We recognize the Williams Treaties First Nations, including the Chippewas of Georgina Island, Rama, Beausoleil, the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, the Credit and Scugog Island, as well as the Huron Wendat and the Metis Nation of Ontario – Region 7. We are committed to renewing our relationships and deeply appreciate their historic connection and unwavering care for this land and water.

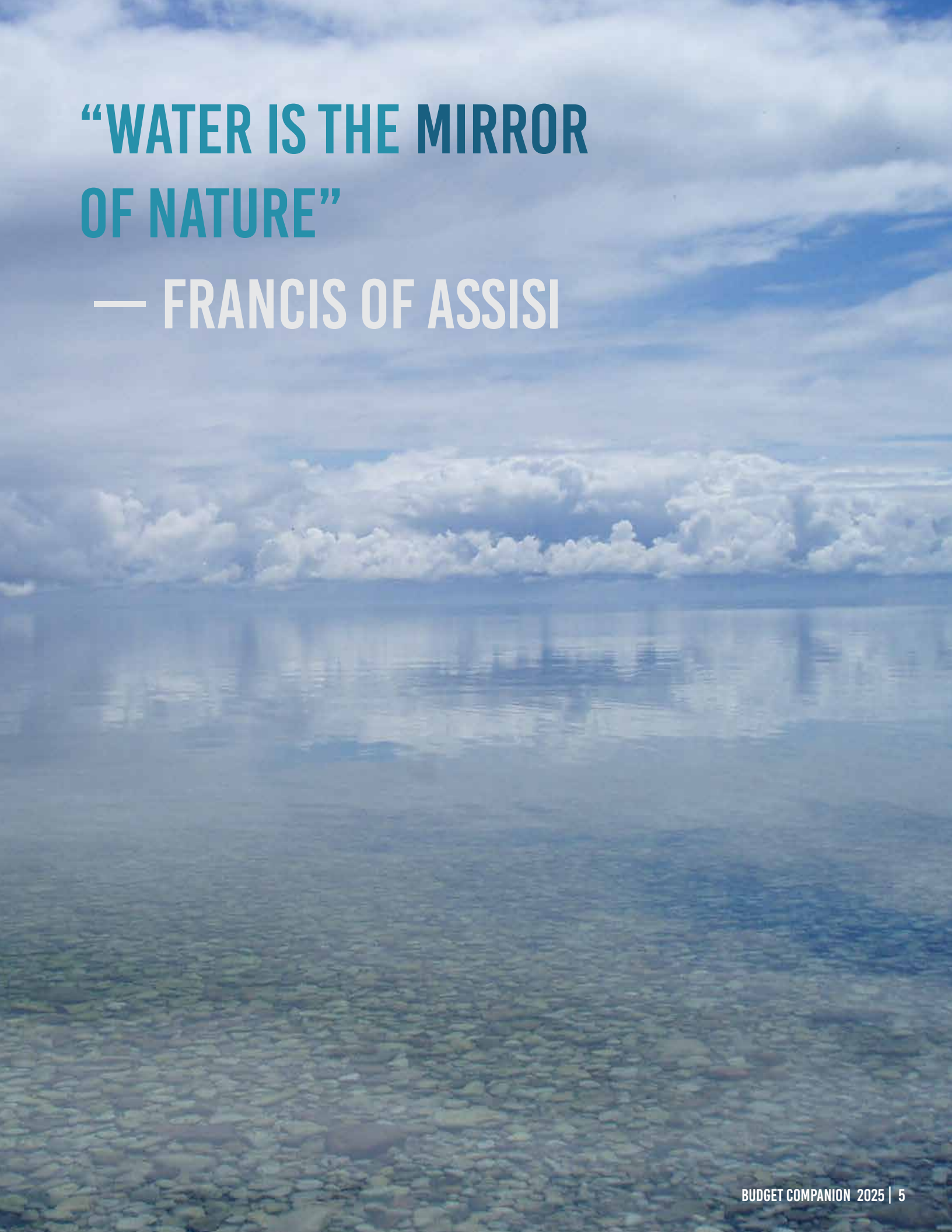
We are the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. We are a local watershed management organization incorporated under the province of Ontario's **Conservation Authorities Act 1946**, and for over 70 years now, we have been focused on the conservation, restoration, and management of this incredible ecological gem.

To deliver on our mandate and commitments, we employ over 100 full-time, part-time, contract and seasonal staff across numerous professional fields who provide expertise within the following seven service areas:

- Corporate Services
- Ecological Management
- Education & Engagement
- Greenspace Services
- Planning & Development Services
- Water Risk Management
- Watershed Studies & Strategies

OUR MISSION:

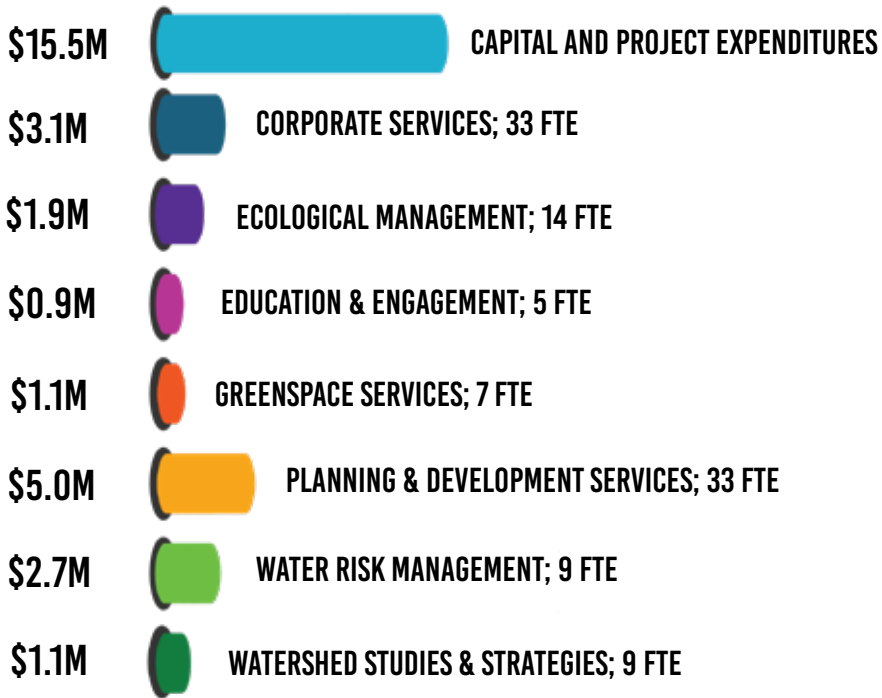
WE COLLABORATE TO
PROTECT AND RESTORE
THE LAKE SIMCOE
WATERSHED WITH
INNOVATIVE RESEARCH,
POLICY AND ACTION.



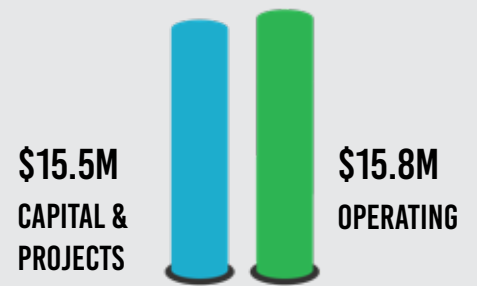
**“WATER IS THE MIRROR
OF NATURE”**

— FRANCIS OF ASSISI

2025 CONSOLIDATED BUDGET SUMMARY



CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT

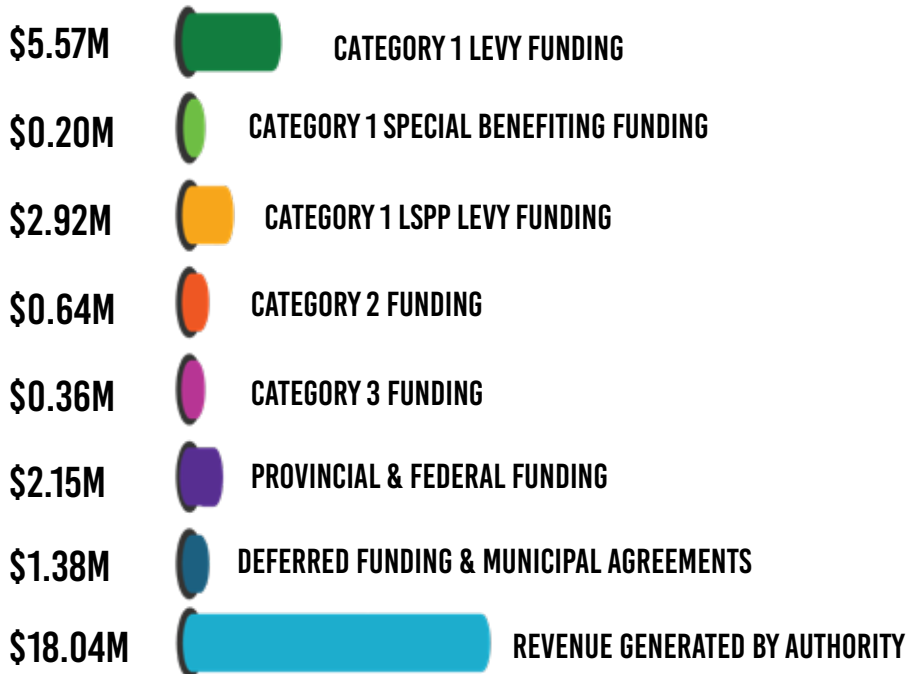


BUDGET \$31.3M

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 110

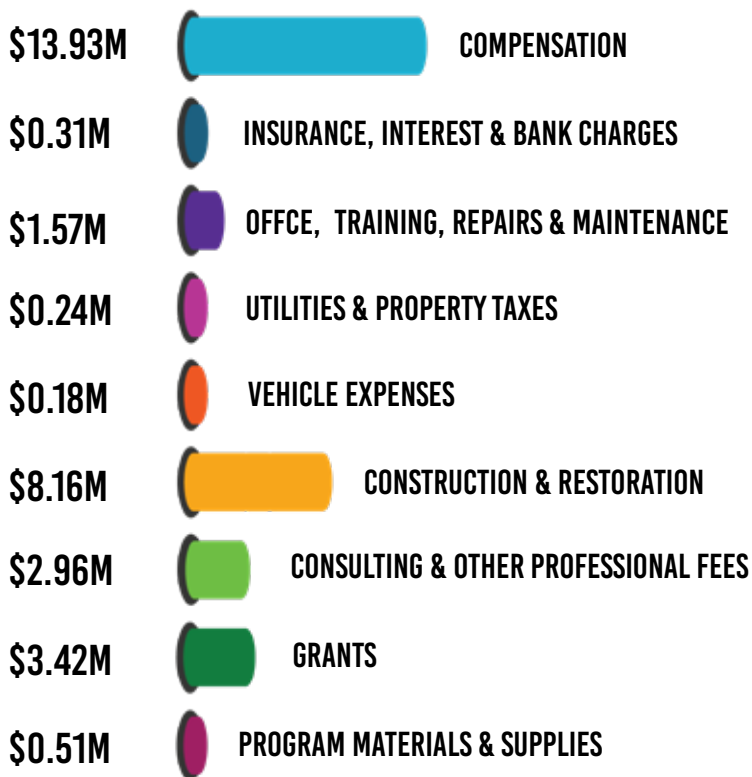


REVENUE SOURCE \$31.3M



Note: Budgeted draws from reserves make up the difference between expenditures and revenues in 2025

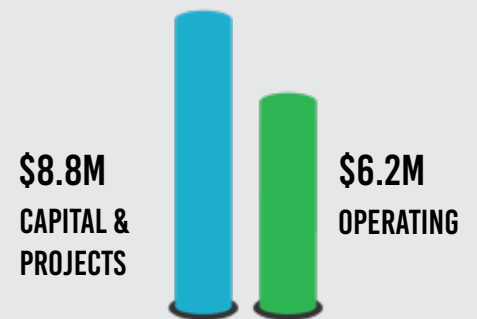
EXPENDITURE TYPE \$31.3M



CORPORATE SERVICES



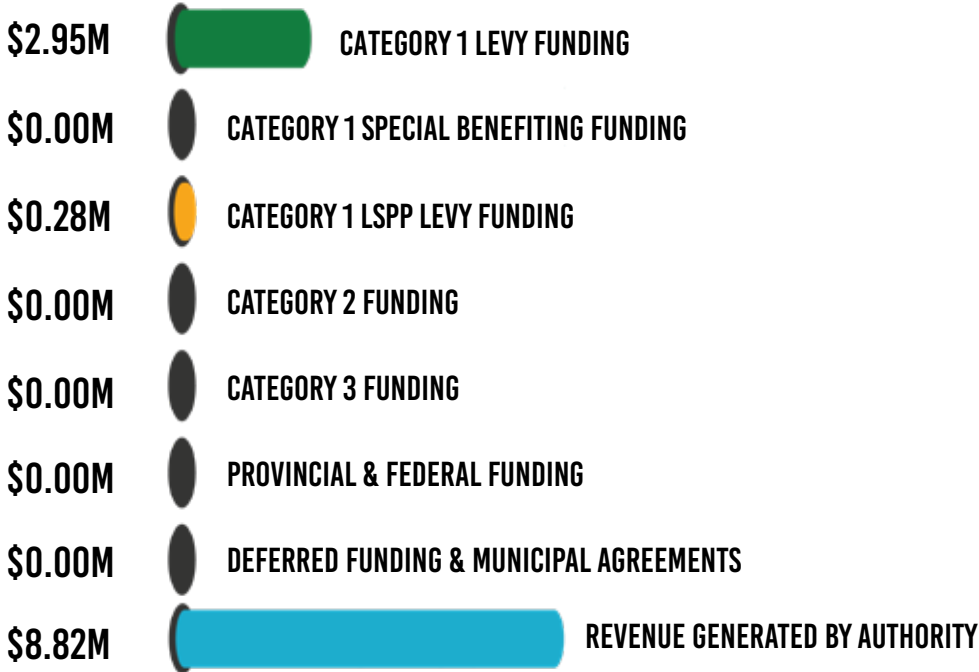
CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT



BUDGET \$15.0M

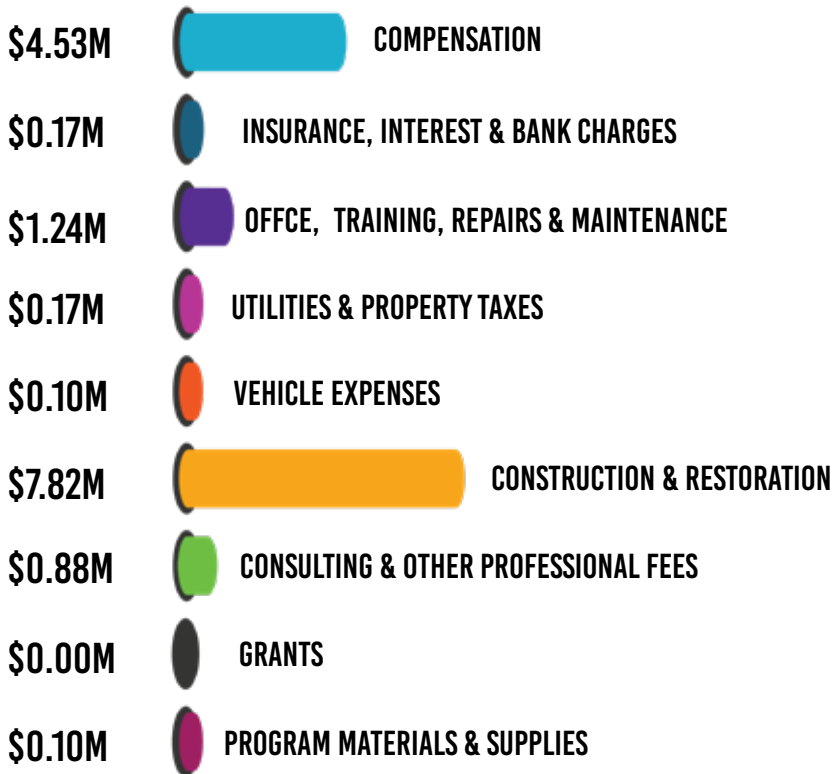
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 33

REVENUE SOURCE \$12.1M



Note: Budgeted draws from reserves make up the difference between expenditures and revenues in 2025

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$15.0M



*less internal fee for service of \$3.16M

Corporate Services provides leadership and management in the delivery of services central to the successful functioning of the entire organization. Corporate Services consists of the following program areas:

- Corporate Communications
- Facility Management
- Financial Management
- Governance
- Human Resource Management
- Information Management



CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

Corporate Communications and Engagement Services provides strategic communications and marketing oversight and delivers a broad range of initiatives to inform, inspire, influence, and motivate government partners, groups, and people of all ages across our communities to achieve a healthier watershed.

2025 FOCUS

- Lead the development of a comprehensive Indigenous Relations Framework to guide the organization in building respectful, inclusive, and mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous communities in our watershed.
- Roll out the 2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan, using clear, targeted communications to drive awareness, engagement and action.
- Refresh our Social Media Strategy to build on its success and deepen engagement with our audiences.
- Lead Change Management Communications for digital transformation, supporting a seamless transition to more efficient and innovative practices.
- Build and strengthen relationships with news media to reinforce the Conservation Authority's role as a leading expert on environmental issues related to lake and watershed health.
- Drive greater participation and understanding of Conservation Authority programs and services by focusing on strategic and targeted communications.

OUTLOOK

- Our reputation continues to gain positive momentum, with growing media coverage, expanded social media reach, and strong engagement with our community partners, watershed residents, and all levels of government.
- Increased online activity, and targeted communications and marketing, are boosting social media followers and a greater awareness of our programs and services.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Algorithm changes and an evolving digital landscape require continuous adaptation of digital strategies and new social media trends to maintain engagement.
- The rise of misinformation and criticism of conservation authorities, necessitates new strategies for sharing information, advocacy, and engagement activities.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Led the development of the updated strategic plan, setting a clear vision for the future.
- Launched the "Have Your Say" platform to serve as an interactive hub where watershed residents, stakeholders, and community partners learned about ongoing projects, shared their insights and contributed ideas.
- Successfully collaborated on the delivery of the Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy, Conservation Areas Strategy, and Subwatershed Plans platform.

FAST FACTS

- 19% growth in subscribers to our education programs and events contact list.
- 18% increase in our Do-It-Yourself seedling sale contact list.
- Shared 38 reels, each with over 1,000 views, on social media.
- 22 watershed residents presented with a Conservation Award at our annual gala.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Facility Management oversees the management of all assets (buildings and infrastructure, vehicles, and equipment). This includes purchases, leases, repairs, scheduled maintenance, licenses, insurance, utilities, and taxes.

2025 FOCUS

- Advance major construction of the Scanlon Creek Nature Centre, a net-zero, accessible, and inclusive facility, set for completion in early 2026.
- Renovate Administrative Office washrooms as part of asset maintenance and to improve aesthetics.
- Replace the main powerline and install back-up power generators at Scanlon Creek to ensure uninterrupted service for the Operations and new Nature Centres.
- Complete Phase 3 in the employee office chair asset replacement project.
- Boost energy efficiency and lower emissions by replacing the Scanlon Workshop oil furnace with an air source heat pump.
- Redesign the Scanlon Creek Conservation Area main driveway to better accommodate school buses and traffic.
- Continue to upgrade maintenance equipment to align with carbon-reduction goals.

OUTLOOK

- Inflation, supply chain disruptions, and availability of materials is anticipated to continue to impact current and future maintenance and construction projects and green fleet vehicle replacements.
- Recent renovation of the Operations Centre and completion of a new Nature Centre will mean that asset management and maintenance focus will shift to the older Administrative Office.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Adapting facility and fleet vehicle service levels to meet new and evolving business delivery models, as well as employee health and safety requirements.
- Supply chains and market fluctuations continue to impact service and material costs, causing delays of up to 6 months for some scheduled projects and product deliveries.
- Increased maintenance is required at the existing Nature Centre to ensure the safe delivery of Education programs.

FAST FACTS

- The Scanlon Creek Nature Centre will be an inclusive, accessible, and immersive teaching facility designed for net-zero operation. It will feature 4 adaptable rooms for classroom learning, professional development, and meetings, along with a teacher preparation room, equipment storage, all-gender washrooms, and breakout spaces.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed the Scanlon Creek Nature Centre architectural and landscape design and secured a general construction contractor.
- Implemented Phase 1 of the Scanlon Creek Nature Centre development project, constructing a new parking lot and installing a sewer line.
- Repainted parking lot lines at the Administrative Office to improve aesthetics, meet accessibility standards, and optimize operations.
- Completed Phase 2 of 4 in the employee office chair asset replacement project.
- Replaced an aging dump truck, snowplow, and road sander to maintain seamless service delivery.





FAST FACTS

- The 2025 Budget was presented to the Board of Directors in December 2024, marking the earliest presentation in the history of the Conservation Authority.
- 2024 is our 9th consecutive year without an appeal related to our Freedom of Information requests.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial Management is responsible for day-to-day financial operations such as payroll and accounts payable/receivable as well as budgeting, procurement, risk management, procured legal services, quarterly and annual financial reporting, records management, freedom of information requests/reporting, and reception services.

2025 FOCUS

- Target more detailed budget assumptions for 2026, with a plan for early approval in December 2025.
- Develop a needs assessment for the next steps in online payments, selecting a robust software vendor for client payments that is adaptable to future integrated planning tools.
- Advance long-term capital planning to better sequence projects for new capital and asset management.
- Explore artificial intelligence tools to streamline and improve records management, **Freedom of Information Act** requests, and routine financial operations.
- Research corporate financial software options, consistent with the direction of the Conservation Authority's digital transformation.

OUTLOOK

- Fiscal restraints from municipal funding partners, combined with the Finance Department's commitment to business excellence, will drive new program and process improvements and efficiencies.
- Opportunities to leverage artificial intelligence to make improvements in financial reporting, processing, and investments.
- Persistent increases in the Construction Price Index make cost forecasting in the capital budget challenging.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Municipal funding partners require earlier budget information and multi-year projections, requiring an accelerated budget process.
- Growing procurement needs have resulted in higher demand for staff support within the Finance Department.
- Increasing complexity of budgeting, forecasting, and financial reporting - driven by project accounting and additional grant submissions - is straining limited staff capacity.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- The 2024 Budget, presented in the new format legislated by the Province of Ontario, received unanimous approval from all 9 funding municipalities, and the Board of Directors.
- Completed and received Board approval for the Asset Management Financial Strategy, outlining the adequacy of short- and long-term funding to ensure the Conservation Authority's assets are in a state of good repair.
- Continued to streamline staff efficiency in a "3 office" environment by implementing new electronic workflows for purchase orders, purchasing card reconciliations, staffing forms, and expense claims processing.
- Shifted investment policy from variable rate to fixed rate to maximize returns on temporarily idle cash in reserves, achieving returns more than 1% above market at the end of 2024.
- Accelerated the 2025 budget process, delivering the draft budget and presentation at the December 2024 Board of Directors' meeting.



FAST FACTS

- Online, annually, we publish a board-approved budget, a description of all programs and services (Budget Companion), as well as an audited financial statement.
- Our primary municipal watershed funders are Durham and York Regions, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil, New Tecumseth, Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Barrie, and Kawartha Lakes.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- All mandatory requirements under the **Conservation Authorities Act** changes were implemented and approved ensuring full compliance.
- Concluded implementing Transformation, our 2022 - 2024 Strategic Plan.
- Continued as a member of the Conservation Ontario Board of Directors helping guide all conservation authorities.

GOVERNANCE

The Chief Administrative Officer provides expert knowledge, strategic advice, and recommendations to the Board of Directors on policy, program, and budget decisions. The Chief Administrative Officer also provides operational leadership to more than 100 staff to guide and influence processes, decisions, and implementation, to advance our mission.

2025 FOCUS

- Tracking and responding to the provincial election and subsequent potential legislative or regulatory changes.
- Implementing a refreshed 2025 – 2028 Strategic Plan and reporting dashboard.
- Increasing advocacy efforts with all watershed partners to continually demonstrate the critical value the Conservation Authority provides.

OUTLOOK

- The political landscape in Canada and the United States is evolving rapidly, potentially requiring change in programs and service delivery. It is certain that 2025 will be a year of change requiring responsive action and change management where and when required.
- Increases in efficiencies will be an area of critical consideration in response to partner and public demands for higher levels of customer service and timeliness.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- The existing housing crisis represents a significant service pressure with many unknowns that may directly or indirectly influence operations, as well as municipal and provincial partnerships. Political uncertainty and change will be prevalent, and responding to that pressure will be a key focus for 2025.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human Resources is responsible for the effective support and management of people in the organization through the provision of services such as attraction and retention, health and safety, performance management, employee relations, learning and development, benefits and compensation design and administration and policy development.

2025 FOCUS

- Commence the first phase of the multi-year Talent Management Strategy with a focus on performance management.
- Continue our ongoing partnership with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and their Health and Safety Excellence Program to develop a more comprehensive Health and Safety program.
- Maintain support for the professional development and growth of our valued employees.

OUTLOOK

- Succession planning, learning, and development opportunities are critical for employee performance, satisfaction, attraction, and retention, making effective talent management a priority now and in the future.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Employers in Ontario are navigating challenges like talent shortages, shifting political dynamics, new technologies, and sustaining employee engagement in hybrid work environments. To address these pressures, a strong emphasis is required on talent management, employee wellness initiatives, and change management.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed 2 modules that enhance our health and safety program through our partnership with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and their Health and Safety Excellence Program.
- Leveraged technology to streamline workflow processes in Human Resources and Health and Safety, creating greater efficiencies.
- Updated workplace policies to ensure compliance with evolving employment legislation and regulatory standards.

FAST FACTS

- 74% of full-time staff have worked for the Conservation Authority for 5 or more years.



INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Information Management is responsible for providing and managing secure, reliable, and integrated information technology solutions that align with our business and strategic goals while delivering excellence in client service. Services include network support, information management solutions, cybersecurity, helpdesk and end user support.

2025 FOCUS

- Advance the Information Management Steering Committee's work to better guide our digital transformation strategy.
- Support the Engineering and Regulations teams in completing a major update to hazard mapping regulations, aligned with new provincial legislation.
- Introduce artificial intelligence tools for individual use in the workplace, ensuring proper safeguards and training are implemented.
- Continue upgrading the internal map viewer to improve mapping access across all departments.
- Update the disaster recovery plan to enable a faster return-to-operations in the event of a cyber-attack or natural disaster.

OUTLOOK

- As part of our Digital Transformation Strategy, we are developing an internal business portal to improve file and records management across the organization.
- Artificial intelligence is all around us, offering valuable tools while also presenting risks to privacy and services. We must leverage its benefits while protecting our information.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- The transition of business processes to digital formats increases efficiency, but also presents change management challenges.
- Cybersecurity threats require balancing costs while ensuring a smooth-running network and protecting stored private data.
- The constant evolution of information technology makes it difficult to stay up-to-date with a limited budget and resources.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Moved the Regulations and Planning business applications to the cloud, improving staff access, and updated them to reflect changes in provincially legislated regulations.
- Completed a new elevation mapping layer for the Lake Simcoe watershed, providing the most accurate mapping in our history, to support better floodplain mapping and critical watershed decisions.
- Implemented a cloud-based Teams phone system, to unify our communications and integrate with Microsoft 365.
- Completed additional external security assessments to guide future improvements to our security framework.

FAST FACTS

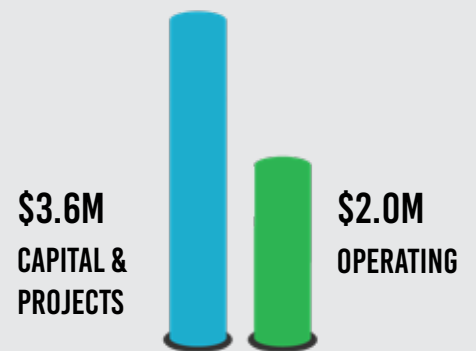
- Collected over 50 billion elevation points derived from an airplane-based laser sensor that provides us with more accurate watershed data to help predict flooding events.
- More than 1 million spam emails attempt to infiltrate our email boxes each year.
- There were 1,600 datasets downloaded from the Open Data and Partner Geographic Information System data portal in 2024.



ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT



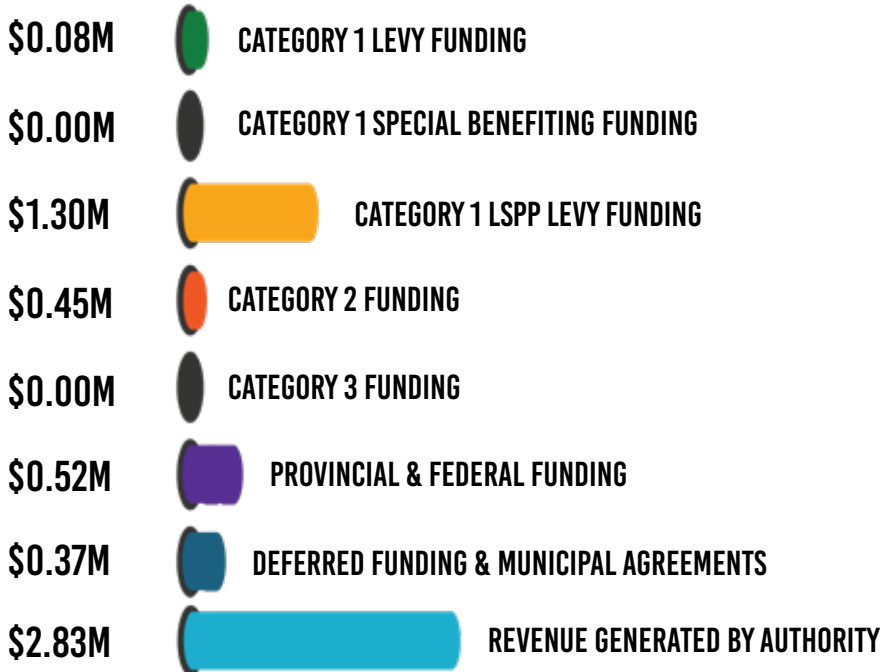
CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT



BUDGET \$5.6M

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 14

REVENUE SOURCE \$5.6M



The goal of Ecological Management is to manage natural heritage systems (forest, wetlands, lakes, rivers, etc.) within the watershed. We do this through monitoring, to understand the current state of our watershed, and then by identifying and implementing restoration projects. Ecological Management consists of the following program areas:

- Ecosystem Science and Monitoring
- Forestry Services
- Restoration and Regeneration

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$5.6M



ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE AND MONITORING

The Ecosystem Science and Monitoring program assesses the health of Lake Simcoe's nearshore zone, the status of fish and aquatic insect populations and evaluates tributary water quality to support science-based management decisions.

2025 FOCUS

- Focus year 2 of the terrestrial monitoring on establishing sites and monitoring in deciduous swamps.
- Continue investigation of the phosphorus loads and dissolved oxygen relationship focusing on changes to the lake food web nutrient cycling in the zooplankton, benthic macroinvertebrate, and aquatic plant components.
- Continue surveillance of the lake for blue green algal bloom and investigate potential causes of the 2024 lake wide bloom.
- Finalize and publish Phosphorus Loads to Lake Simcoe from 2021 to 2023.
- Continue to investigate changing nutrient cycling dynamics in Lake Simcoe through enhanced water quality sampling, aquatic plant sampling, and invasive mussel sampling.

OUTLOOK

- Climate change and the impacts of new invasive species make continued monitoring data ever more critical to formulate management actions.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Climate change is altering ecosystems, which can complicate efforts to monitor and predict future conditions. Uncertainty regarding the rate of change or the impacts of specific climate events can make it difficult to develop effective programs.
- Ecosystem monitoring also involves regular data collection, analysis, and fieldwork, which requires significant and sustained investment for equipment, staff, and maintenance of programs. This program often competes for external funding, which can limit or cause budgets to fluctuate, potentially reducing the scope and frequency of monitoring efforts and hindering the ability to track long-term changes and make timely management decisions.

FAST FACTS

- The 1st year of terrestrial monitoring, identified 176 forest plant species, surveyed 510 trees, completed 260 vegetation quadrat surveys, counted 4,886 shrubs/saplings in 104 subplots, and measured 136 pieces of downed woody debris along 1,300 metres of surveyed paths.
- Monitored fish populations at 38 sites, capturing, identifying, weighing, and releasing 3,290 fish to assess watershed river and stream health.
- Collected over 500 tributary water quality samples annually to evaluate ecological health and calculate phosphorus loads.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Initiated a new terrestrial monitoring program across 26 deciduous forest sites.
- Investigated aquatic plants' role in phosphorus uptake and its impact on phosphorus loads and dissolved oxygen, collecting samples from 245 Lake Simcoe sites.
- Detected and monitored the first lake-wide blue-green algal bloom.
- Published a report on chemical contaminants in Lake Simcoe and its tributaries, analyzing legacy and current-use contaminants, including heavy metals, hydrocarbons, pesticides, and emerging pollutants.
- Completed 2 years of enhanced water quality sampling of Holland Marsh pump-off water, calculating phosphorus loads for the 2022/2023 hydrologic year.
- Collected water quality samples from 22 stations to assess lake and river ecological health and calculate phosphorus loads.





FAST FACTS

- Planted over 46,000 trees and shrubs across 60 sites, establishing more than 26.7 hectares of new forest and canopy cover throughout the watershed.
- Sold 13,900 seedlings to 119 landowners through our annual Do-It-Yourself Planting Program.
- Forestry staff visited 260 sites across East Gwillimbury and Georgina in 2024, collecting data from 5,830 trees.

FORESTRY SERVICES

The Forestry Services program aims to implement best forest management practices that contribute to watershed and community health.

2025 FOCUS

- Complete final reporting for urban forest studies in East Gwillimbury and Georgina.
- Begin developing a forest inventory for the Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve to support long-term management planning for the property.
- Continue to implement afforestation program upgrades in response to changing climatic conditions, and building resilience to address shorter, unpredictable planting seasons.
- Continue forest management planning and operations at Durham Regional Forest, promoting the establishment of native species and building climate change resiliency.
- Begin developing a Forest Management Plan.

OUTLOOK

- External funding opportunities for landowner grants to support tree planting continue to be strong due to the significant focus on climate change impacts arising from various national and world events.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Severe windstorms, torrential downpours, and ice storms continue to demand dedicated resources for clean-up. Increased investment in forest management is needed to improve property safety by removing dead, dying and hazardous trees from trail corridors and around infrastructure.
- Climate change, invasive species, and diseases threaten forest health and canopy cover, requiring innovative approaches to planting and forest management. Adapting tree planting systems to changing seasonal conditions is essential for improving planting success.
- Competing land use pressures in the watershed, including agriculture, urban development, and other environmental initiatives, continue to challenge efforts to secure large areas for tree planting initiatives.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed final reporting for urban forest studies in Newmarket and Whitchurch-Stouffville, and conducted field data collection for studies in East Gwillimbury and Georgina.
- Removed hazard trees near facilities and along conservation area trails, and responded to a major windstorm event at Durham Regional Forest, which required temporary property closures and the removal of fallen and hazardous trees.
- Undertook forest management activities at Durham Regional Forest, removing mature red pine trees to allow the re-establishment of native forest cover.
- Monitored artificial bat habitat structures at Scanlon Creek, Rogers Reservoir, and Luck Conservation Areas, supporting the establishment of habitat to mitigate losses from the Metrolinx rail corridor expansion.
- Installed new information kiosks at Durham Regional Forest to improve safety and trail user experience.
- Renewed partnerships with York Region and Forests Ontario to continue tree planting service, enhance natural heritage cover, address climate change impacts, and contribute to overall community health.



RESTORATION AND REGENERATION

The Restoration and Regeneration program implements natural heritage, agricultural best management practices, and watercourse restoration projects to enhance, restore, and create natural features to improve water quality, control water quantity, and infiltration within the watershed.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue to focus on reporting our projects using key performance indicators and other environmental benefits.
- Discover new opportunities to implement restoration projects with public and private landholders to achieve ecological gains.
- Conduct ongoing outreach with the agricultural community to gain insight and secure commitments to implement restoration projects and environmental best management practices.

FAST FACTS

- Over 31 hectares of land was restored to enhance the natural heritage system in Lake Simcoe Watershed.
- Over 1,044 volunteers planted over 6,275 trees and shrubs.
- We funded our first wetland enhancement project on private land through our Ecological Offsetting project in Oro Medonte. It was a successful project that enhanced a total of 0.7 hectares of land, planted over 960 trees and shrubs, over 730 herbaceous plants, and created 21 habitat structures.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Provided over 100 grants to private landowners and community groups through our restoration assistance program.
- 75% of the projects completed this year helped increase biodiversity and 73% enhanced pollinator habitat.
- Collaborated with our watershed partners to host 26 community events, plant trees and shrubs, remove invasive species and engage with community volunteers.

OUTLOOK

- Through the Ecological Offsetting program and upcoming government grants, we have exciting opportunities to deliver and support natural heritage restoration projects across the watershed.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Restoration projects take many years to implement and partner delays are unpredictable.
- It's difficult to find and obtain commitments from private and public landowners to implement restoration projects.
- Added pressures from climate change and severe weather are changing how projects should be implemented.



**“LOOK DEEP INTO NATURE,
AND THEN YOU WILL
UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING
BETTER.” — ALBERT EINSTEIN**

EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

\$0.2M  COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING; 1 FTE

\$0.7M  SCHOOL PROGRAMMING; 4 FTE

CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT

\$0.0M
CAPITAL &
PROJECTS



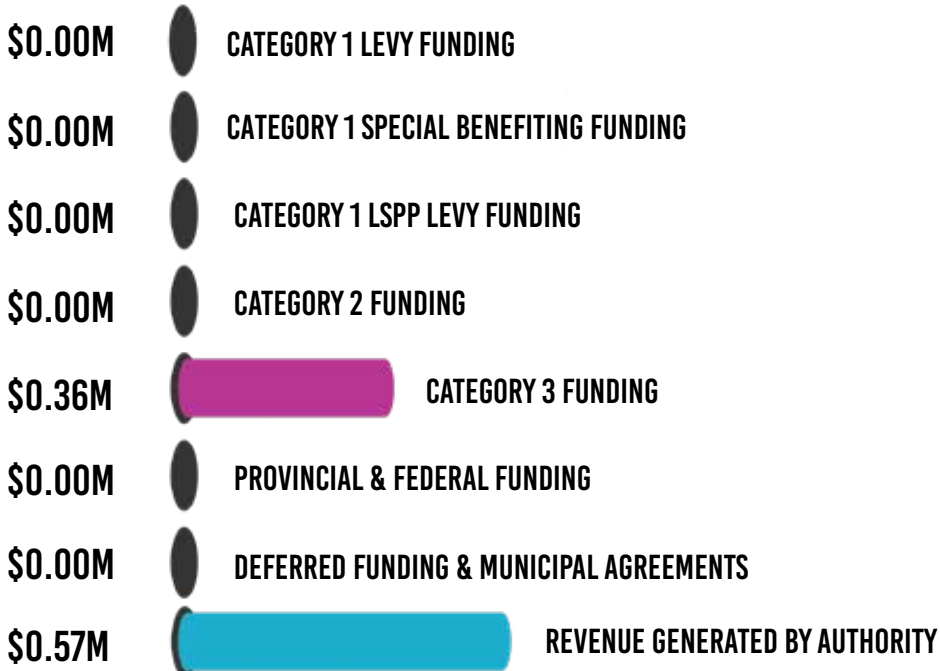
\$0.9M
OPERATING

BUDGET \$0.9M

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 5



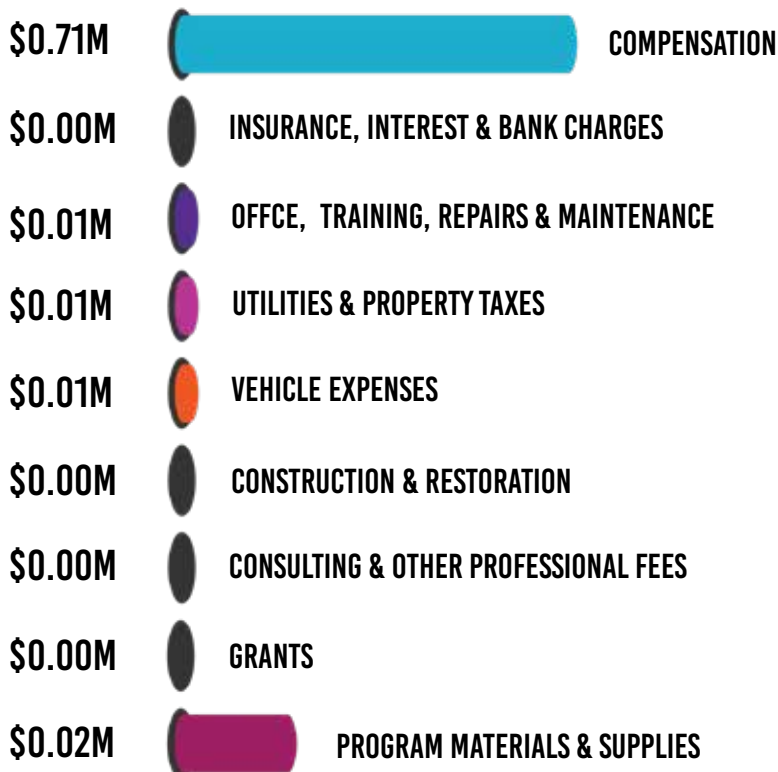
REVENUE SOURCE \$0.9M



The purpose of Education and Engagement is to engage learners of all ages, interests and abilities through programmed learning experiences that raise awareness, impart knowledge, create understanding, and inspire action that leads to real and lasting change. Education and Engagement consists of the following program areas:

- Community Programming
- School Programming

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$0.9M



COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

Community programming provides unique learning opportunities for children, youth, and adults, enhancing participants' connections to the health of the Lake Simcoe watershed in areas where they live, work and play.

2025 FOCUS

- Grow our Scanlon Creek summer camp by adding a fifth week.
- Continue to strengthen our partnership with Kumi Canada through their sponsorship of 2 Therapy in the Woods sessions and a new Kamp Kumi for their associates' children.
- Grow the Park Prescription program in the Lake Simcoe watershed by hosting our second annual event and through opportunities with local partner organizations.
- Formalize a new partnership with Town of Innisfil and provide education programs and services at targeted municipal events and camps.

OUTLOOK

- Watershed municipalities are growing and changing at a fast pace, presenting opportunities for program expansion and diversification to support health and wellness and engage more people in learning about, and taking action to protect, the Lake Simcoe watershed

FAST FACTS

- Engaged with 1,733 children, youth and adults through various community programs and events.
- Hosted a hike at Scanlon Creek with 2 new community partners – Bradford Women's+ and Bradford Hustlers.
- Collaborated with Cambium Indigenous Professional Services to improve our Climate Escape program by strengthening the focus on Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Seven Generations Teachings, before testing it with the Ontario Nature Youth Council.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Challenges remain in striking a balance between programs that are close to full cost recovery but accessible to everyone.
- Delays in advancing the construction of the new Nature Centre have translated into extended time in an existing building no longer adequate for our needs.



2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Successfully expanded our summer camp from 1 to 4 weeks and sold out within 48 hours.
- Hosted our first-annual Park Prescription Day, a free event at Scanlon Creek to raise awareness about the critical connection between nature and our physical health and well-being.
- Strengthened our partnership with Kumi Canada who sponsored our summer session of Therapy in the Woods, a food pantry at the Nature Centre for summer camp participants and donated educational supplies and materials.



2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Successfully launched the Climate Learning Hub, a suite of school programs and services designed to support the next generation of climate leaders, sponsored by the RBC Foundation. Presented this new resource at 2 annual conferences; Ontario Society for Environmental Education and Watershed Interpreters' Network Rekindle the Sparks.
- Expanded the contract scope with York Region District School Board to add a new climate change program for grade 5 and 6 classes, including schoolyard experiences and professional development for educators.
- Expanded contract scope with Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board and introduced a new 2-part grade 7 program called Climate Champions.
- Our Education Program Specialist was appointed as the Ontario Regional Coordinator for Take Me Outside's pilot outdoor learning mentorship program.

SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

School Programming provides provincial curriculum-connected, experiential, and engaging programs and services for students and educators from kindergarten to grade 12.

2025 FOCUS

- Develop and implement a plan to transition and scale up school programming from current to new Nature Centre.
- Build capacity in outdoor and environmental educators by delivering professional learning workshops, hosting pre-service teacher candidates, and fulfilling our role in the new Take Me Outside mentorship program.
- Launch a new schoolyard program where grade 5 classes learn about local climate change projections and potential impacts before designing and prototyping climate-adaptive structures.
- Achieve deliverables associated with 4 school board contracts and negotiate new ones for the 2025/26 school year.
- Achieve deliverables associated with year 2 of the RBC Tech for Nature grant, including the full roll-out of Go with the Flow, a new schoolyard program focused on flood risk, natural hazards, water quality, and stormwater management.

OUTLOOK

- Our school programs and services continue to experience higher demand than ever before, providing an opportunity to build partnerships and generate more revenue.
- Our proven adaptability, innovation, and reputation demonstrate that we will continue to succeed and remain key players in education programs and service delivery.

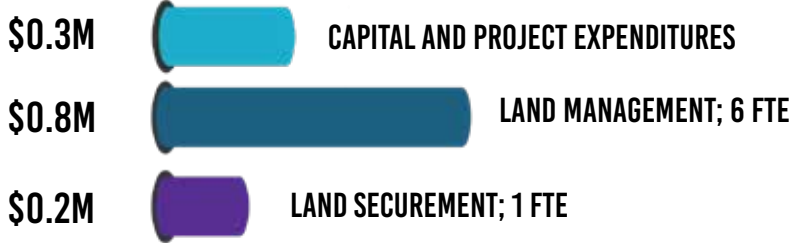
SERVICE PRESSURES

- Increases in extreme weather and environmental factors, such as snow squalls, cold snaps, and poor air quality, have increased the need for rebook days which pose challenges for education program scheduling and achieving fee-based revenue targets.

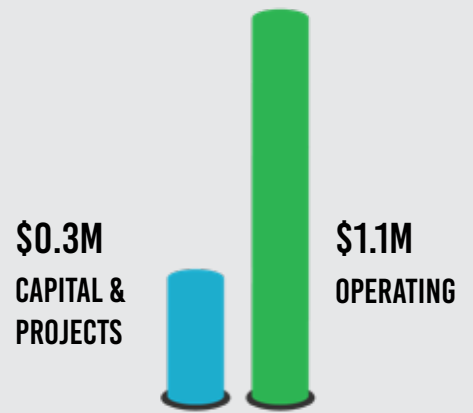
FAST FACTS

- Facilitated 32,015 hours of outdoor learning for students through field trips to the Nature Centre and schoolyard outreach.
- Hosted a meeting with members of the Ontario Association of School Business Officials Environment and Sustainability Committee, showcasing our innovative experiential learning programs.

GREENSPACE SERVICES



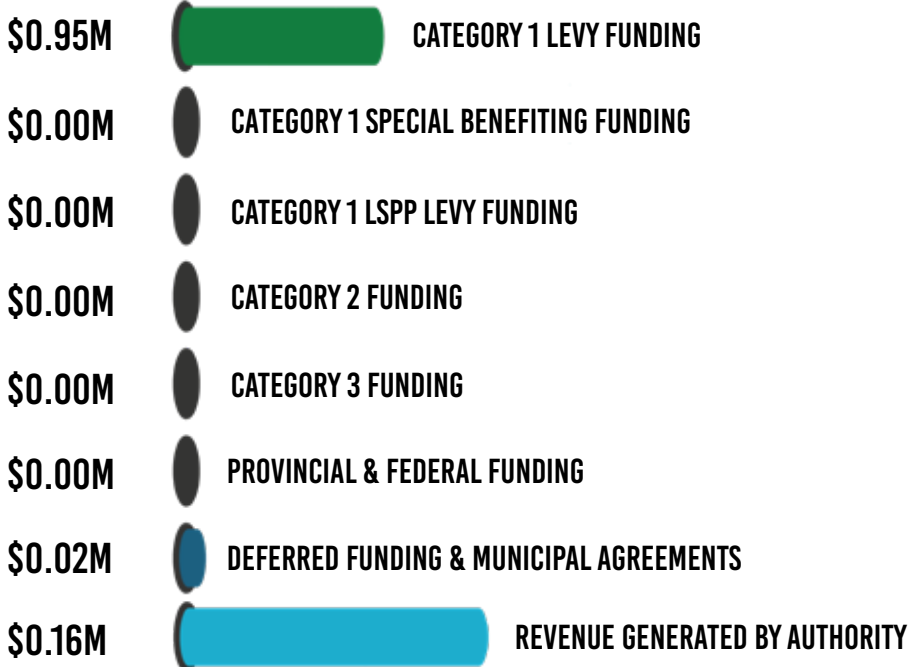
CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT



BUDGET \$1.4M

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 7

REVENUE SOURCE \$1.1M



Note: Budgeted draws from reserves make up the difference between expenditures and revenues in 2025

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$1.4M



Greenspace Services ensures that valuable greenspace is enhanced and restored and that recreational opportunities are provided in safe, well maintained natural settings, so that our watershed residents can enjoy connections to nature and a high quality of life. Greenspace Services consists of the following program areas:

- Land Management
- Land Securement



2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed Phase 2 of the Conservation Areas Signage Strategy, enhancing safety and visitor experience with new interpretive signs along the Beaver River Trail and a trailhead map at Whitchurch Conservation Area. Developed Emergency Action Plan signage for Scanlon Creek Conservation Area.
- Upgraded trails and infrastructure at Beaver River Conservation Area, including trail resurfacing and bench installations. A structural engineering inspection of a bridge provided repair recommendations to improve user safety and protect the surrounding environment.
- Completed the Conservation Areas Strategy and Conservation Land Inventory, requirements under the **Conservation Authorities Act**.
- Installed trees and benches at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area, continuing our Memorial Program, in partnership with the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation.
- Began a Land Relationship Visioning project at the Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve, in partnership with Cambium Indigenous Professional Services and the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, to incorporate Indigenous and Western knowledge into long-term property management planning.
- Actively managed invasive plant species at Rogers Reservoir, Scanlon Creek Conservation Area, and the Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve.
- Installed perimeter fencing and gates at Rogers Reservoir, Holland Landing and Beaver River Conservation Areas, and the Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve.

LAND MANAGEMENT

We approach Land Management with the goal of striking a balance between conserving the natural environment and facilitating opportunities for outdoor recreation, education, and awareness.

2025 FOCUS

- Prioritize deliverables from the Conservation Areas Strategy and begin implementation.
- Build a new trail at Rogers Reservoir, in partnership with the Town of East Gwillimbury, to replace an unsustainable route with a safe, accessible corridor that protects natural heritage.
- Initiate a consultation process with watershed community partners to guide long-term management planning for the Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve.
- Design and construct accessible trail connections at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area to improve facility access.
- Implement Phase 3 of the Conservation Areas Signage Strategy, including trailhead, regulatory and wayfinding signage.
- Explore replacement options for the 11th Concession former rail bridge along the Beaver River Trail and develop capital replacement plan.

OUTLOOK

- Conservation lands continue to be an important resource for the community, providing health and wellness benefits. Delivering mandatory services under the **Conservation Authorities Act** requires setting service level standards to inform capital and operating budgets.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Conservation lands in urban areas face added pressures from increased trail use, variation in use types, encroachment and encampments by people experiencing homelessness.
- Aging infrastructure to support recreational activities on our lands continues to require significant resources for maintenance and management.

FAST FACTS

- We protect more than 2,157 hectares of land in the Lake Simcoe watershed.
- 186,000 people visited our most popular conservation areas in 2024.
- The Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve provides habitat for over 290 plants, 110 wildlife species and includes 38 vegetation community types.



LAND SECUREMENT

Our Land Securement program enhances our landholdings through donations and/or purchases, while taking steps to ensure our property portfolio aligns with Conservation Authority management objectives. This includes securing lands to connect communities with greenspaces for passive recreational activities and restoring and protecting ecological features to support the watershed's natural heritage systems.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue implementing Priority 1 and 2 initiatives as part of our Land Disposition Strategy.
- In support of national targets, collaborate with Conservation Ontario and the Ministry of Conservation, Environment and Parks, to develop a decision support tool for assessing conservation lands for inclusion in the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database.
- Pursue strategic land acquisitions aligned with our Natural Heritage System Land Securement Project (2019-2025) and Ecological Offsetting Program.
- Review and update the Natural Heritage System Land Securement strategy.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- For land securement to be successful, it often requires collaboration with local communities, indigenous communities, and other stakeholders. Lack of engagement or opposition can slow down or undermine efforts, so building trust and ensuring all voices are heard is essential for long-term success.

FAST FACTS

- The Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve, and neighbouring easement properties form our largest collection of protected lands, spanning 446 hectares. Its significant natural heritage features qualify it for nearly 100% tax relief under the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program.

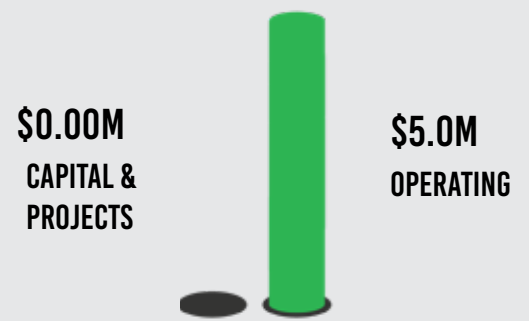
2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Reviewed land securement opportunities from watershed landowners in accordance with the Land Securement Strategy, with most not meeting acquisition criteria.
- Worked with watershed municipal partners to advance our Land Disposition Strategy.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

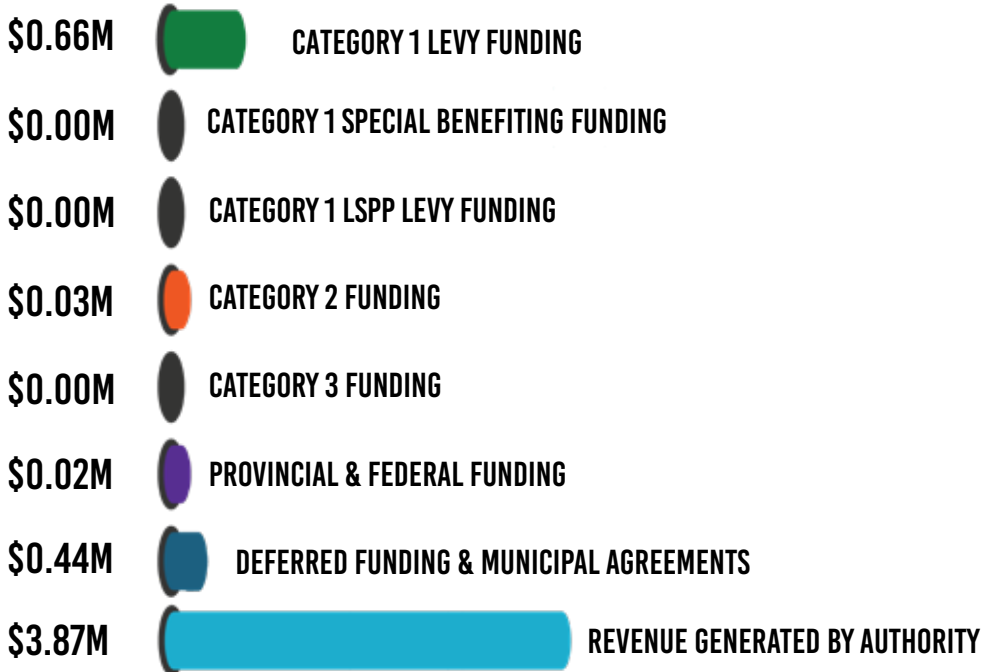


CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT



BUDGET \$5.0M
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 33

REVENUE SOURCE \$5.0M



Note: Budgeted draws from reserves make up the difference between expenditures and revenues in 2025

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$5.0M



Planning and Development Services ensures that development in the watershed progresses in a sustainable manner that will protect natural heritage features, direct development away from natural hazard lands, and will protect our water resources. We follow a planning-first principle which ensures that planning permissions are in place before we consider any further approvals under the **Conservation Authorities Act**. Planning and Development Services consists of the following program areas:

- Development Planning
- Permitting and Enforcement





DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The Development Planning program works in partnership with our Municipal partners and the development community to build healthy and resilient communities. We provide technical expertise in natural heritage, hydrogeology, engineering, and stormwater management. We also deliver proactive and innovative guidance through our review of development applications on stormwater management, groundwater recharge and phosphorus loading. Our goal is to influence sustainable development that conforms with provincial policy including protecting drinking water sources and directing development away from natural hazard areas.

2025 FOCUS

- Re-engage and collaborate with the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) through the review of policy updates and other strategic objectives.
- Continue to collaborate with municipal partners to identify ways to further streamline processes.
- Continue to provide technical education sessions to industry partners on watershed planning.
- Launch the Planning and Development Procedural Manual to provide guidance to industry partners in the preparation of submission materials.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the ecological offsetting policies and update.
- Complete a review of the stormwater management guidelines and provide a framework for updates.
- Provide opportunities for continuous learning and development for staff through professional training and engagement.

OUTLOOK

- The Lake Simcoe watershed continues to see extensive growth pressure requiring staff to address the balance of growth, community, and environment.
- Engaging with our municipal and development industry partners continues to be a key focus to increase efficiency, reduce timelines and embrace moving to digital submissions.
- Changing roles and responsibilities due to recent legislative changes are being solidified and new planning processes are being implemented as a response.

FAST FACTS

- Received 506 applications made under the **Planning Act**.
- Reviewed 309 hydrogeology submissions.
- Reviewed 117 Natural Heritage submissions.
- Reviewed 548 engineering submissions in support of **Planning Act**, Environmental Compliance Approval, and permit applications.
- Provided 298 pre-consultation responses on concept submissions.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Maintaining a high caliber of client service and balanced fees can be challenging due to constant fluctuations in the housing market.
- Shorter municipal plan review timelines will impact Authority review timeframes.
- Quality of technical submissions continues to decline, increasing the amount of staff time required to review applications, which is compounded by reduced approval timelines in the **Planning Act**.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Collaborated with municipal partners to identify practices to ensure timely approvals of **Planning Act** applications.
- Assisted local municipal partners with comprehensive updates to municipal Official Plan, Secondary Plan and Zoning Bylaw documents.
- Undertook a re-review of the Fee Schedule with Watson and Associates to ensure accurate fees and cost recovery with updated roles and responsibilities.



FAST FACTS

- Reviewed 779 permit applications and issued 544 permits under Section 28 of the **Conservation Authorities Act** and 363 clearances.
- Responded to 1,716 general inquiries from the public.
- Responded to 250 complaints about potential unauthorized development.

PERMITTING AND ENFORCEMENT

The Permitting and Enforcement program is responsible for implementing and enforcing the **Ontario Regulation 41/24** and the **Conservation Authorities Act**. This legislation requires that development is obtained prior to undertaking development within lands identified as hazard lands*. The goal of regulating development within hazard lands is to reduce loss of life, property damage, and social disruption.

*Hazard lands have a very distinct definition within the legislation. For ease of understanding, we generally refer to hazard lands as those that are susceptible to flooding, erosion, have unstable soils, watercourses, wetlands, or lands adjacent to wetlands.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue to implement client service improvement strategies, including updating our customer service strategy.
- Further streamline our permit approvals process including digital approvals and online payments.
- Continue to update the regulation mapping including pending floodplain updates and refining the erosion hazards.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of our Regulation Implementation Guidelines and offsetting policies.
- Engage and collaborate with the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) on the update of policies and guidelines and other strategic initiatives.

OUTLOOK

- Customer service remains a top priority while implementing our mandate of protecting people and property. We will continue to monitor emerging issues and government priorities and utilize collaborative approaches and adaptability to ensure consistent decision making and prioritization of services and delivery to the public and our municipal partners.

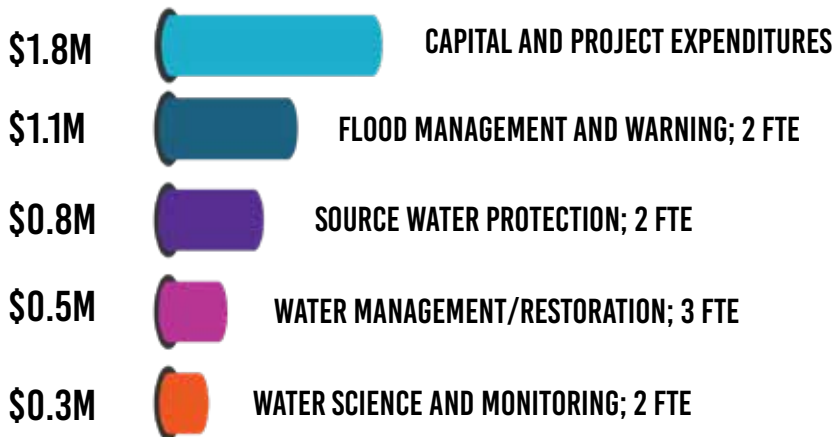
SERVICE PRESSURES

- Uncertainty around future legislation and regulatory changes.
- Significant housing demands creates pressure to identify suitable lands for development including marginal lands.
- An increase in the complexity of files, combined with reduced timelines for review results in difficulty balancing efficiency and thorough reviews.

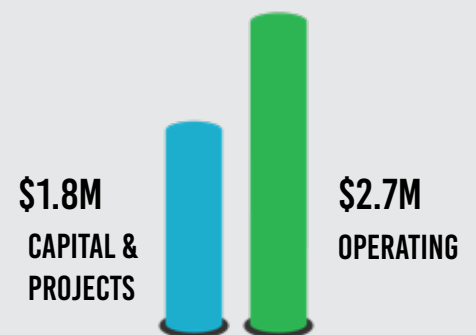
2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Met 97% of the timelines for permit issuance.
- Updated our guidelines and procedural documents as part of legislative changes.
- Developed a procedural document for issuing stop orders under the updated **Conservation Authorities Act** and Regulation.
- Updated the regulation mapping in accordance with the updated **Conservation Authorities Act** and Regulation.
- Undertook a review of the development fees with Watson and Associates to ensure cost recovery.

WATER RISK MANAGEMENT



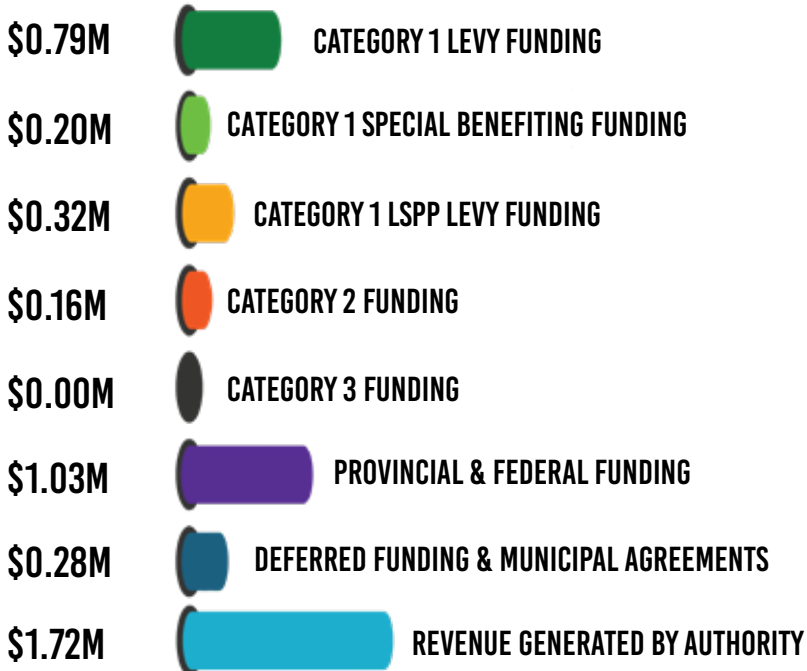
CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT



BUDGET \$4.4M

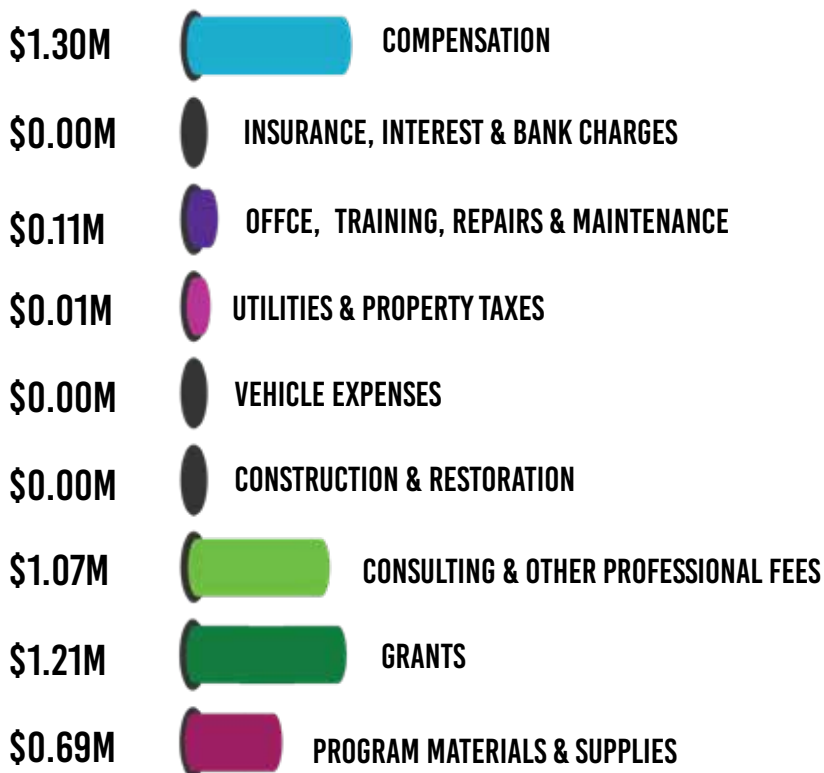
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 9

REVENUE SOURCE \$4.5M



Note: Budgeted draws from reserves make up the difference between expenditures and revenues in 2025

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$4.4M



The goal of Water Risk Management is to ensure that we have a safe, clean, and adequate supply of drinking water, to undertake restoration projects to protect and manage water and to engage in research activities to inform decision making. Water Risk Management consists of the following program areas:

- Flood Management and Warning
- Source Water Protection
- Water Management/Restoration
- Water Science and Monitoring





FAST FACTS

- Issued 12 riverine flood messages, 8 shoreline hazard messages, 1 spring safety message and 1 winter safety statement.
- Monitored 14 stream flow gauges, 5 precipitation gauges and 8 snow survey sites.
- Engineering staff delivered the keynote address at the Canadian Chapter of the International Erosion Control Association in Montreal.
- Engineering staff presented jointly with staff from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority at the York Region Emergency Management Conference.

FLOOD MANAGEMENT AND WARNING

The goal of the Flood Management and Warning program is to reduce the risk to people, property, and infrastructure (roads, bridges, etc.) from hazards due to flooding and to reduce social disruption.

2025 FOCUS

- Complete an audit of the flood program to determine how best to fulfil the mandate of protecting people and property from flooding.
- Continue focusing on Development Plan Reviews to reduce the risk of flooding in the Lake Simcoe watershed.
- Continue to monitor weather forecasts and watershed conditions to inform flood messaging and support partners and stakeholders.

OUTLOOK

- Advancements in technology, mapping and real-time monitoring, continue to improve the accuracy and timeliness of flood forecasting and warning activities. As well, increased agency collaboration and community engagement are further enhancing resilience and preparedness for flood events.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Climate change increases the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, making flood forecasting and warning more unpredictable and challenging. Urbanization can exacerbate flood risks through increased runoff while aging infrastructure struggles to keep up with modern flood management demands, making predicting new flood-prone areas challenging.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Supported the completion of Phase 1 of the Sophia Creek Barrie Urban Flooding Project.
- Partnered with the Integrated Watershed Management Team to deliver a multi-disciplinary study assessing climate change impacts on urban flood risk in the Sophia Creek subwatershed.
- Completed regulations updates for the Lake Simcoe Shoreline hazards related to flooding and erosion.
- Completed floodplain regulation updates for the Brock Street culvert in Uxbridge.



Photo Credit: Dan Andrews

FAST FACTS

- Over the past year, staff have undertaken amendments to the Source Protection Plan to address proposed changes at 3 municipal drinking water systems and to address growth projections or replace aging infrastructure.
- There are currently 287 municipal wells, and 16 water treatment plants in the South Georgian Bay – Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed our annual report to the Minister on plan implementation.
- In 2024 we saw member municipalities complete all the Risk Management Plans required to address the threats to drinking water that existed when the Plan came into effect.
- Coordinated with watershed municipalities to ensure new drinking water systems were added to the Source Protection Plan.
- Completed a review of Source Protection Plan policies to ensure they remain appropriate, given recent changes to provincial policy, and began the process to consult with stakeholders on the changes.
- Completed a review of our water budgets, to ensure that municipal resources remain sustainable in the face of a growing population.

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

Ensure sustainable and safe sources of clean drinking water to residents, within the South Georgian Bay - Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region, by ensuring legislative requirements within the **Clean Water Act** and ensuring policies in the Source Protection Plan are implemented.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue to review and amend the source protection plan to incorporate new municipal drinking water systems, as required by Regulation 205 of the **Safe Drinking Water Act**.
- Continue to support municipal partners in their management of existing and new threats to drinking water.
- Continue to support the Source Protection Committee, including replacing members whose terms are coming to an end.

OUTLOOK

- Our legislated requirements under the **Clean Water Act** will continue to define our pivotal role as the lead Source Protection Authority; this includes supporting the Source Protection Committee and reviewing and amending the Source Protection Plan.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- The **Safe Drinking Water Act** requires amendments to the Source Protection Plan before any new (or expanded) municipal drinking water system can be put into use. The rate of growth and development in our source protection area will result in a significant workload for years to come.
- Continued provincial funding of this program is needed to ensure service levels are maintained and no delays occur to the approval of any new (or expanded) drinking water systems.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- There were 2 low impact development projects implemented that achieved a total of 3,100 cubic metres of water infiltrated and 0.49 kilograms of phosphorus reduced per year.
- We have engaged the Town of Newmarket on a design for a large property which provides an opportunity to not only improve stormwater infrastructure but also improve the natural heritage system and will include a trail network.
- We are continuing our partnership with the Town of Georgina to install 14 catch basin inserts which will be monitored by the conservation authority in 2025.

FAST FACTS

- Partnered with municipalities to implement projects that address stormwater and treated over 25 hectares of land.
- 3,960 metres of watercourse was buffered and enhanced through streambank erosion projects and plantings.
- 73% of the projects we funded address climate change stressors.

WATER MANAGEMENT/RESTORATION

The Water Management/Restoration program aims to improve water quality and better manage water quantity during storm events through the implementation of low impact development and innovative stormwater pond retrofits.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue to engage private, commercial landowners, to address large amounts of stormwater and maximize environmental benefits.
- Partner with our local municipalities to complete stormwater retrofit projects and the installation of pretreatment devices.
- Implement construction projects in our urban environment to address stormwater through recently finalized designs.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Restoration projects take many years to implement and partner delays are unpredictable.
- It continues to be challenging to find willing landowners and public/private land suitable for stormwater related restoration projects.
- Additional pressures from climate change and severe weather increase the importance of implementing urban stormwater management projects.

OUTLOOK

- We will continue to cultivate partnership opportunities with municipalities to identify, support and implement urban restoration projects, including low impact development retrofits, through in-kind work and funding through the phosphorus and water balance offsetting programs.





FAST FACTS

- Our stream flow monitoring stations collect a data point every 5 minutes and the network of 14 stations generate almost 1.5 million points of data annually.

WATER SCIENCE AND MONITORING

The Water Science and Monitoring program is essential to informing our understanding of watershed processes, identifying emerging issues, and documenting environmental trends. This information is used to allow us to adapt our management activities to achieve our mission of a healthy Lake Simcoe and watershed.

2025 FOCUS

- Conduct pre-construction performance monitoring of a stormwater facility slated for retrofit, to establish a baseline for post-construction comparison.
- Work with municipal partners to complete Consolidated Linear Environmental Compliance Approval receiver monitoring pilot and develop an implementation strategy for interested municipalities.
- Continue to develop environmental flow methodology for Lake Simcoe subwatersheds.
- Conduct a review of the Low Water response program.
- Continue to operate and maintain 14 stream flow monitoring stations, 1 lake level station, 5 weather stations and 11 groundwater monitoring stations.

OUTLOOK

- Our stream flow monitoring network will continue to play a key role in the detection and assessment of local climate change impacts. With extreme weather events predicted to increase, the network will play a greater role in guiding response efforts to such events.
- Activities under stormwater performance monitoring continue to grow, with an increased focus on low impact development and research, to improve our understanding of stormwater runoff impacts and treatment.

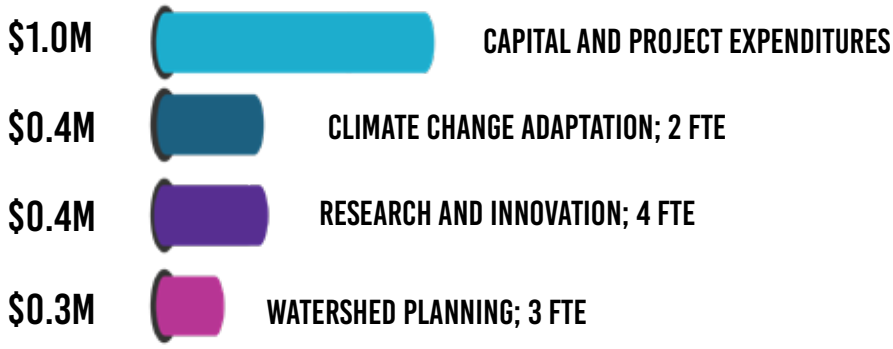
SERVICE PRESSURES

- Challenges around predictability and certainty of project-specific funding agreements with municipal and provincial partners can impact the effectiveness and viability of our program.

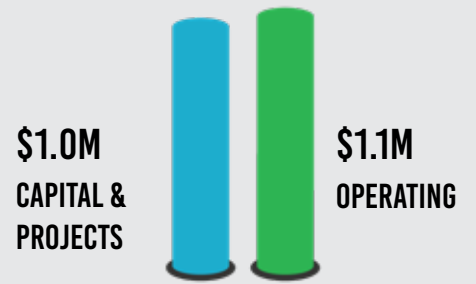
2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed a 2-year study measuring phosphorus loading from 3 urban residential catchments of different ages.
- Continued performance monitoring of 2 stormwater pond retrofits, comparing the facility to design criteria/pre-construction monitoring performance.
- Conducted enhanced monitoring of Hawkestone Creek flows and water levels to develop an environmental flow framework that can then be implemented across all Lake Simcoe subwatersheds.
- Installed 2 new real time precipitation monitoring stations and refurbished 6 bulk precipitation collectors.

WATERSHED STUDIES & STRATEGIES



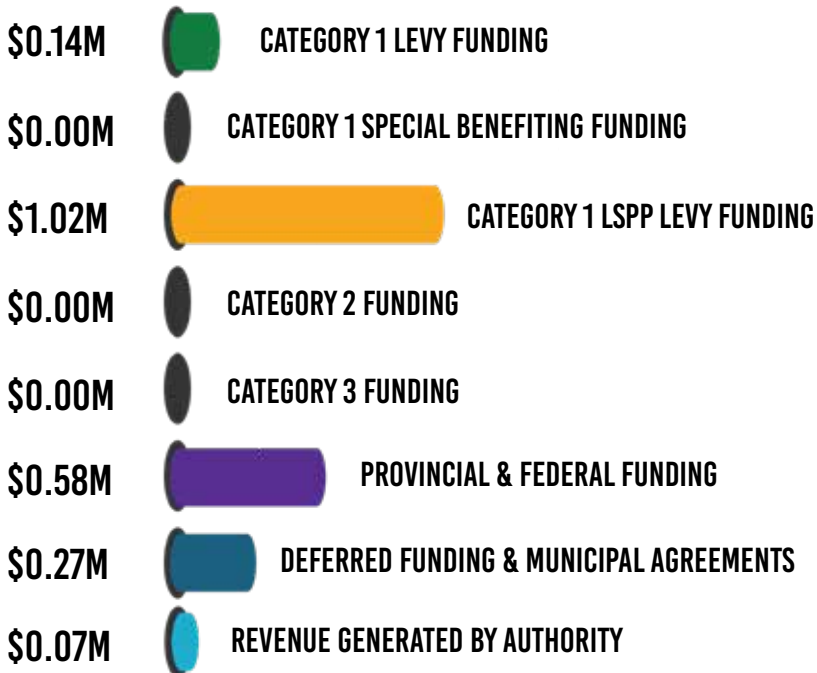
CAPITAL, PROJECTS AND OPERATING SPLIT



BUDGET \$2.1M

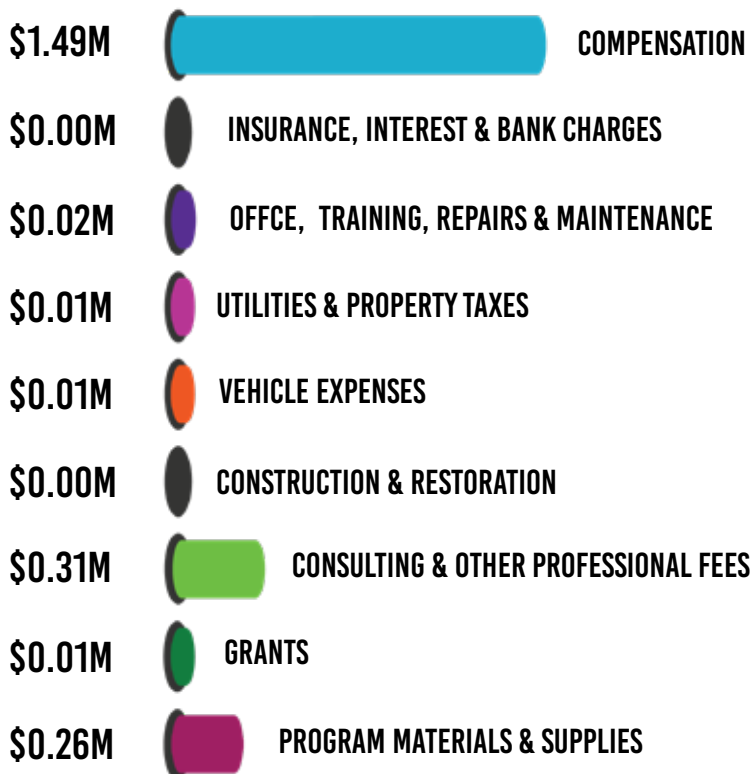
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): 9

REVENUE SOURCE \$2.1M



Note: Budgeted draws from reserves make up the difference between expenditures and revenues in 2025

EXPENDITURE TYPE \$2.1M



Watershed Studies and Strategies focuses on conducting research and science to inform the decisions that we make regarding our policies, regulations, and restoration works. Watershed Studies and Strategies consists of the following program areas:

- Climate Change Adaptation
- Research and Innovation
- Watershed Planning



CLIMATE CHANGE

The Climate Change program aims to ensure the resilience of communities, water resources, and natural heritage systems within the Lake Simcoe watershed, to climate risk. Our actions and desired outcomes are directed by our climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue to build understanding of natural assets and habitat restoration projects in carbon sequestration, supporting municipal net-zero goals.
- Conduct a pilot study on the role of urban forest expansion in meeting municipal greenhouse gas emission targets.
- Undertake a study to evaluate cost-effective options to mitigate climate-related flooding in an urban catchment.
- Host a workshop series on nature-based climate solutions and their role in municipal climate goals.
- Begin a review and update of the Conservation Authority's Corporate Carbon Reduction Strategy.
- Continue evaluating climate change impacts on the delivery of Conservation Authority programs and services.
- Incorporate climate change predictions in subwatershed planning processes.
- Strengthen our leadership role in guiding, advising, and supporting municipal climate change working groups.

OUTLOOK

- Our Climate Change Strategies and implementation plans position us as leaders in climate change adaptation and mitigation within the watershed.
- As climate change remains a key concern for watershed residents, municipalities and all levels of government, nature-based solutions offer a powerful tool for both adaptation and mitigation. While not a stand-alone solution to the climate crisis, they have the potential to make significant contributions in the Lake Simcoe watershed.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Climate change remains a significant concern, with many watershed municipalities declaring climate emergencies and setting net zero targets for their communities. We will continue to play an important role in helping municipalities work toward these ambitious, yet necessary targets.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued to develop our understanding of carbon sequestration rates in the Lake Simcoe watershed, exploring ways for the Conservation Authority and member municipalities to increase sequestration. This included ongoing sequestration monitoring in select restoration projects, in street trees, and native ecosystems.
- Completed a pilot project estimating the impact of climate change on extreme heat events in an urbanized municipality, and the cooling potential of an expanded urban forest.
- Published a report identifying native species resilient to climate change, informing updates to municipal and Conservation Authority planting lists.
- Completed a pilot project to predict how much climate change will affect flooding within an urban catchment.
- Supported multiple climate change working groups and committees to ensure collaboration with municipal, non-governmental and other partners.

FAST FACTS

- 2024 was the hottest year on record within the Lake Simcoe watershed. Without significant action to reduce and eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, average temperatures in the Lake Simcoe watershed are predicted to increase by 5 degrees celsius by 2080.
- Since the release of our Climate Change Adaptation (2020) and Mitigation (2021) strategies, two-thirds of the recommendations have been achieved or are in progress.

FAST FACTS

- Provided inspection and maintenance training to 100+ municipal staff and other stormwater professionals.
- Performed stormwater management inspection and maintenance services for 311 stormwater management facilities.



RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Research and Innovation supports and advances management approaches to mitigate human activities that negatively impact the health and quality of Lake Simcoe and its watershed. These approaches must be outcome oriented, cost-effective, easy to implement, and transferrable.

2025 FOCUS

- Continue to deliver 7 fee-for-service municipal stormwater management facility inspection and maintenance programs.
- Lead 4 municipal working group sessions to support improved low impact development inspection and maintenance planning and execution.
- Develop and deliver training to support municipal low impact development inspection and maintenance activities using best practices.
- Develop and deliver stormwater management inspection and maintenance training to municipal staff.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Finding sustainable external funding to support continued innovations.
- Ongoing regulatory changes for municipal stormwater management.

OUTLOOK

- Stormwater management research and innovation will help position and inform municipalities as they transition to a holistic approach to stormwater management and legislative compliance.
- Identifying maintenance efficiencies for sediment and leaf litter removal for municipal stormwater management, will support cost savings and collaborative municipal stormwater management planning.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued to provide technical support for municipalities in adopting or adapting the Lake Simcoe watershed municipal stormwater management database to track facility locations, types, and relevant components for assessment to improve inspection and maintenance of stormwater facilities.
- Delivered 7 fee-for-service municipal stormwater management facilities inspection and maintenance programs.
- Delivered a field day and virtual training session on stormwater management pond inspection and maintenance training for our watershed municipalities and other jurisdictions in Ontario.
- Led 4 municipal working group sessions to support improved low impact development inspection and maintenance planning and execution.
- Delivered 2 stormwater management technical working group sessions, focusing on best practices and innovations in planning, design, operation and maintenance, and implementation themes for industry practitioners, municipalities, academics, and stakeholders.
- Supported ongoing development and refinement of the Wiki Low Impact Development Manual through the Sustainable Technologies Evaluation Program partnership.

FAST FACTS

- Between its launch in July, and the end of 2024, the new online watershed planning platform has had over 2000 visitors.

2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued to coordinate implementation of subwatershed plan recommendations with partners.
- Launched a new online platform for watershed planning, providing municipalities with greater access to resources and more frequent updates to support their planning needs.
- Published the Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy, one of the new provincially mandated programs and services required of conservation authorities.
- Partnered with Toronto Metropolitan University on a study to examine the impacts of climate change on municipal salt application practices.



WATERSHED PLANNING

Watershed Planning involves identifying stressors affecting watershed health, selecting preferred solutions to address these impacts, and then monitoring progress and adapting plans to achieve desired outcomes. Watershed planning is essential to improving the health of Lake Simcoe and the watershed and is a legislated requirement of several provincial policies, including the **Lake Simcoe Protection Act** and Plan.

2025 FOCUS

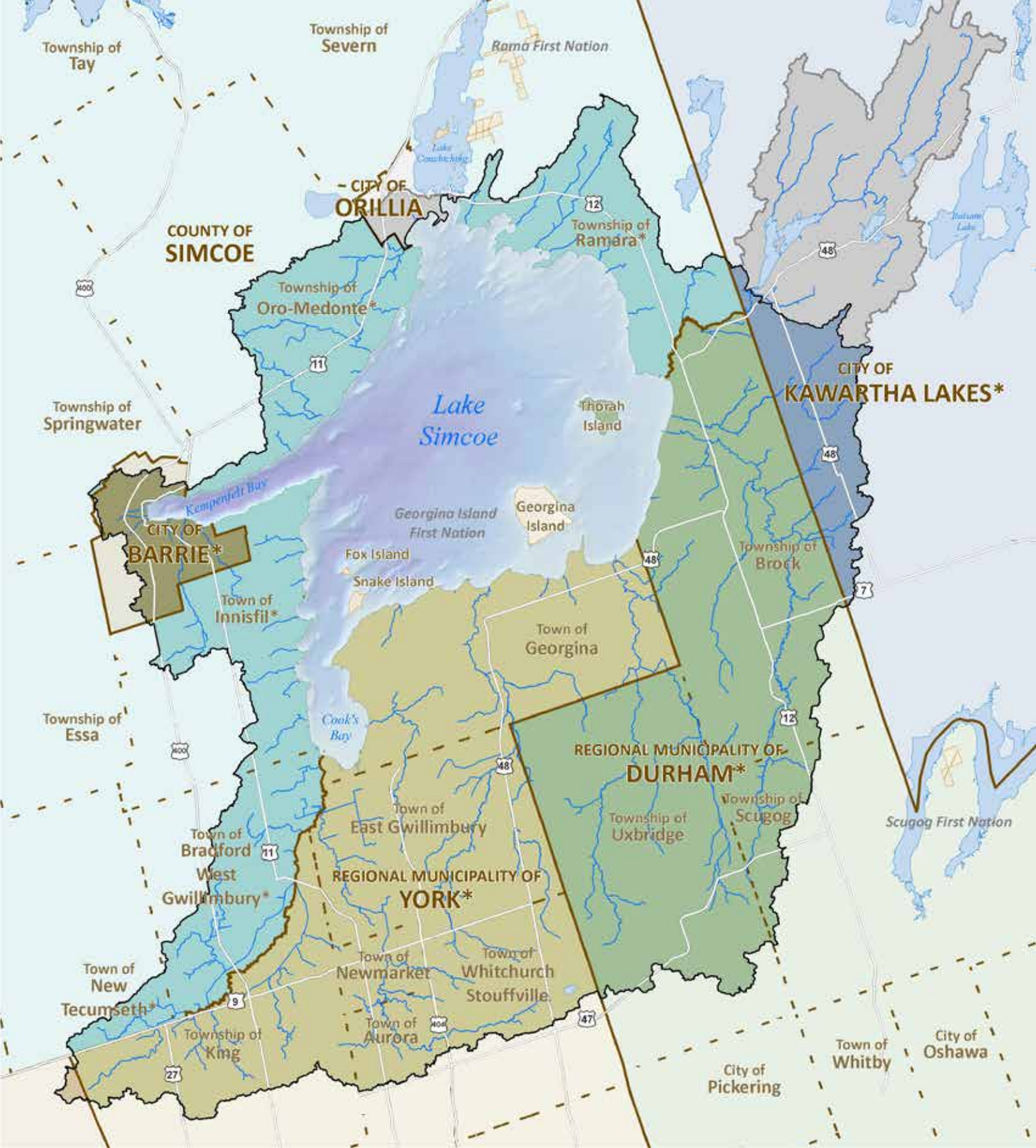
- Confirm environmental goals, set targets, and develop success indicators to better assess progress towards achieving subwatershed plan goals.
- Support adoption of recommendations within the winter salt application discussion paper.
- Incorporate climate change predictions in subwatershed plans.
- Update the watershed's landcover map, to track changes in landcover since 2018.
- Undertake a study on farmer perceptions of environmental best management practices on farmland, and support restoration in a review of their programming, as necessary.

OUTLOOK

- Under the Growth Plan and Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, municipal land use and infrastructure planning documents need to be informed by watershed and subwatershed plans. Our watershed planning program remains an important service to member municipalities and the development industry, and continues to be a valuable tool to translate watershed science into land use planning practices.

SERVICE PRESSURES

- Funding constraints limit our capacity to complete critical studies needed to update and implement modernized subwatershed plans.



Legend

- Lake Simcoe Watershed
- LSRCA Jurisdiction
- Watercourse
- Major Road
- Upper / Single Tier Municipality
- Lower Tier Municipality
- Member Municipality, LSRCA



This product was produced by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and some information depicted on this map may have been compiled from various sources. While every effort has been made to accurately depict the information, data / mapping errors may exist. This map has been produced for illustrative purposes only.
 LSRCA GIS Services DRAFT created January 2016.
 © LAKE SIMCOE REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY, 2016. All Rights Reserved
 The following datasets municipal boundaries and roads are © Queens Printer for Ontario, 2016. Reproduced with Permission

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority is the leading environmental protection agency in the Lake Simcoe watershed. For over 70 years, we've been collaborating with community, government, and other partners to protect and restore the environmental health and quality of Lake Simcoe and its watershed.

• 120 Bayview Parkway. Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 3W3 •

E infomail@LSRCA.on.ca  [lakesimcoeconservation](https://www.instagram.com/lakesimcoeconservation)
T 905-895-1281  [@LSRCA](https://twitter.com/LSRCA)
TF 1-800-465-0437  [TheLSRCA](https://www.youtube.com/TheLSRCA)
W LSRCA.on.ca  [lakesimcoeconservation](https://www.facebook.com/lakesimcoeconservation)

If you require this document in an alternate format, please contact us at 905-895-1281.



Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation is the leading environmental charity in our watershed, raising funds from individuals and organizations for the critical environmental programs and projects of Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority. It is one of only a few environmental charities nation-wide that has been accredited in Imagine Canada's Standards Program after demonstrating excellence in operations in the charitable sector. Contact them directly for information about how you can support their important fundraising activities.

E foundation@LSRCA.on.ca
T 905-895-1281
TF 1-800-465-0437
W lakesimcoefoundation.ca

