

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Canada Water Agency and *Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* Funding Opportunities

Report No: FA-34-23

Date: July 21, 2023

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-34-23: Canada Water Agency and *Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* Funding Opportunities **BE RECEIVED**.

THAT staff continue **TO COLLABORATE** with key stakeholders to advance conservation authorities critical initiatives in support of Canada Water Agency Mandate and *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* priorities.

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this report **BE CIRCULATED** to **NPCA** jurisdiction municipalities.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on conservation authority's role related to Great Lakes water quality and shoreline resilience. The report further highlights NPCA's priorities and current actions in support of the Canada Water Agency and *Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* related funding opportunities.

Background:

a) *Canada Water Agency*: Further to the 2023 Federal budget commitment of \$85.1 million over five years and then \$21 million ongoing thereafter, the Federal Government has established the Canada Water Agency to protect Canada's freshwater supply. The Agency is intended to share the latest freshwater science and serve as a major data hub to fund high-priority watershed initiatives (including the Great Lakes) through the Federal Government's renewed *Freshwater Action Plan*. The Agency is also tasked with modernizing the *Canada Water Act* to ensure the Federal Government has the tools to work with the provinces and territories on protecting and restoring shared waters.

b) *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement*: The achievement of goals in the *Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* (GLWQA) is supported by investments from both governments through separate funding programs (i.e., Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in the U.S. and the Great Lakes Protection Initiative in Canada). On March 24, 2023, Canada announced its

commitment of \$420 million in additional funding over 10 years to preserve and restore waters of the Great Lakes. Enhanced Canadian funding commitment from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is focused on both the Canada Water Agency and GLWQA priorities including delisting Areas of Concern, achieving the phosphorus reduction target for Lake Erie, and advancing restoration and protection of priority coastal natural areas that are under high cumulative stress.

c) In February 2023, Conservation Ontario (CO) made budget submissions for an increased multi-year funding commitment. Conservation Ontario's 2023 Federal Budget Submission (*Appendix 1*) and Provincial Pre-Budget Submission (*Appendix 2*) reinforced the need for increased investments to achieve improvement in Great Lakes water quality. Additionally, on January 17, 2022, CO sent a letter to the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Finance, and the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, supporting the environmental and economic sustainability of the Great Lakes and creating of the proposed Water Agency.

d) The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI) with member Mayors from Ontario and Quebec, and the United States, released their 2023 Canadian Federal Priorities for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin earlier this year with a focus on leveraging Federal resources and tools to support climate adaptation for coastal communities. Niagara Region (NPCA's jurisdiction) has a strong leadership at the GLSLCI table and NPCA anticipates collaboration with GLSLCI to support on the ground delivery and increased investment in Great Lakes water quality programs.

Discussion:

Conservation Authorities (CAs) are key delivery partners to achieve commitments made by federal and provincial governments related to the *GLWQA* and *Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health* (COA) related to various monitoring, habitat restoration and remediation actions implemented through local Remedial Action Plans and Lakewide Action and Management Plans (LaMPs). Thirty-five of 36 Conservation Authorities' watersheds drain into the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River and 26 have Great Lakes coast and/or St. Lawrence River shoreline to manage for natural hazards (e.g., coastal flooding and erosion).

CO and CA representatives participate on several bi-national committees with Canadian and U.S. partners. CO is a member of the bi-national Great Lakes Executive Committee representing watershed management agencies. NPCA is currently a representative on the LaMP committee representing CO and is the lead coordinating agency of the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP).

CAs have also been long time partners in collaborating with the municipal, federal, and provincial governments and other international agencies in addressing many aspects of Great Lakes protection, restoration and conservation. Many CAs (including NPCA) have legislative mandates for the management of long stretches of Great Lakes coastline, protecting and restoring Great Lakes tributaries, and taking actions in the watersheds contributing to Great Lakes water quality.

These efforts address new and continuing threats to Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health, including aquatic invasive species, excessive nutrients, harmful pollutants, discharges from vessels, climate change and the loss of habitats and species. CA programs also protect the Great Lakes which are a direct source of drinking water to 60% of Ontarians. Reducing nutrients and erosion from our watersheds and coastlines improves Great Lakes water quality, thus reducing algae that create taste and odour and, in some cases, toxins from our drinking water.

Overall (based on 2019 figures), CAs engaged approx. 535 landowners resulting in 702 rural water quality projects; 88% of which were agricultural. Close to \$2M in grant dollars were provided to landowners to implement projects including windbreaks, soil erosion control measures, manure

storage, and stream buffers. The total value of these projects was estimated to be in the order of \$5M to the rural and agriculture economy which went to design, materials, contractors and farmers to implement the projects. This approximates the return evidenced in economic stimulus studies undertaken in the U.S. which estimate that every dollar invested in the Great Lakes restoration initiative is projected to generate more than three dollars in additional economic activity.

In addition, CAs provide extensive experience in reducing watershed and coastal flood and erosion risk (and the associated costs of flooding and erosion) through their natural hazards programs. They oversee \$3.8 billion in flood and erosion infrastructure as well as manage watershed-wide rural and urban natural infrastructure assets (forests, wetlands, etc.) that also help to reduce risk. Based on a preliminary 2021 estimates from 10 CAs on the future expenditures anticipated to mitigate coastal impacts over the next two years ranged from \$100,000 to \$50M each.

NPCA's Current Actions and Priorities:

1) Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP): The Niagara River Area of Concern (AOC) is defined as the 58-km connecting channel flowing from the mouth of Lake Erie to Lake Ontario with ongoing collaboration and coordination between Niagara River RAP representatives in the U.S. and Canada. NPCA is the coordinating agency of the Niagara River (Canada) RAP with funding from the federal and provincial governments through the Great Lakes Protection Initiative and Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy funding sources. NPCA coordinates local partners (i.e., federal, provincial, and municipal governments, environmental organizations, industry, scientists, non-government organizations, First Nations and Métis communities, and the public) in implementing projects that aim to improve the Niagara River's water quality and ecosystem health. NPCA continues to deliver on ongoing commitment to the de-listing of the Niagara River AOC including monitoring, community engagement, and maintenance following de-listing. In September 2022, NPCA hosted education and awareness activities in support of the Great Lakes Forum on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the GLWQA. NPCA staff also participated on expert panels and presented at the International Joint Commission (IJC) Water Quality Board Meeting.

2) NPCA's Great Lakes Shoreline Flood and Erosion Hazard Mapping update and Shoreline Resilience Plan development is scheduled to begin in 2023-2024. NPCA's Shoreline Resiliency Plan will go a step further to broaden shoreline management objectives and strategies to address climate issues, green infrastructure, and ecological considerations.

3) NPCA restoration program includes shoreline restoration initiatives with a focus on nature-based solutions to mitigate erosion hazards.

4) NPCA is working on an extensive shoreline erosion monitoring and mitigation program (for rivers, streams and lake-based shorelines).

5) NPCA's agricultural stewardship projects are being designed to maintain soil health for agriculture, reduce nutrient loadings to the Great Lakes and restore priority watersheds using rural storm water management systems, wetland restoration, tree planting, and promotion of best management practices.

Conclusion and Next Steps

As a local watershed and partnership agency, responsible for two Great Lakes shorelines and boundary waters with the U.S., NPCA is well-positioned to play a key role in delivering on federal and provincial priorities while also addressing the impacts of urbanization and the compounding effects of climate change in the rapidly urbanizing Great Lakes watersheds.

This new funding commitment from the Federal government presents an excellent opportunity to build on more than 70 years of CA expertise and experience as a science and delivery partner to multiple levels of government and international agencies.

Reducing nutrients and erosion from our watersheds and coastlines will improve Great Lakes' water quality. To meet nutrient reduction targets, Conservation Authorities' Healthy Great Lakes / Rural Water Quality / Clean Water programs need a long-term commitment. It takes time to develop targeted action plans with the watershed community, to build support for conservation measures and to implement them. Continued investment is needed for science and monitoring to identify the most effective on-the-ground actions. Investment is needed to increase the scale, scope, and intensity of targeted actions given the growing impact of climate change and development intensification. Watershed projects like buffer strip plantings, septic system upgrades, tree planting and shoreline erosion mitigation /coastal projects contribute to reducing or mitigating impacts on Great Lakes water quality.

NPCA staff will continue to work with CO, Conservation Authority Lakes Leads for GLWQA, LaMP partners, and other stakeholders such as the GLCSI, to address local priorities within our partner municipal jurisdiction of Niagara, Hamilton and Haldimand.

NPCA staff will continue to work with federal and provincial staff to advance priorities in the GLWQA and COA as part of its leadership in implementing the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan.

Financial:

There are no financial impacts resulting from this report at this time.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

This report strongly supports the NPCA's *Strategic Plan 2021-31* under several strategic priorities:

- a) Healthy and Climate Resilient Watersheds,
- b) Supporting Sustainable Growth; and
- c) Partner of Choice.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: Conservation Ontario's 2023 Federal Budget Submission (February 2023)

Appendix 2: Conservation Ontario 2023 Provincial Pre-Budget Consultation Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

Submitted by:

Chandra Sharma, MCIP RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer



Submission on the 2023 Federal Budget

February 10, 2023

Partnering with Ontario Conservation Authorities for Local Delivery Provides Value

Conservation Ontario and Ontario's 36 conservation authorities (CAs) are effective partners for the Federal Government. From policy tables to experienced boots-on-the-ground organizations delivering environmental programs and services, you can count on cost-effective, practical, and efficient approaches to challenging issues.

Conservation authorities offer proven experience in watershed management across Canada's most populated province. We trust our submission provides clear examples of our abilities.

In 2023, we see three main partnership opportunities:

1. Addressing climate change impacts;
2. Protecting people and property from flooding and erosion hazards through floodplain mapping and infrastructure investments; and,
3. Protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River water quality.

We have a number of recommendations and requests for your consideration during the 2023 Federal budget Deliberations:

Recommendation 1: That the Government renew multi-year commitments to Conservation Ontario under the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Program and the Nature Canada Fund.

Recommendation 2: That conservation authorities be eligible for programs developed under the National Adaptation Strategy and the Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan.

Recommendation 3: That the Government provide funding to Conservation Ontario to support the capacity of CAs to successfully deliver the 2 Billion Tree Program.

Recommendation 4: That the Government continue and increase funding to conservation authorities under the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund and under the Natural Infrastructure Fund.

Recommendation 5: That the Government continue and expand its investment in the much-needed Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping program.

Recommendation 6: That the government establish a national high-risk flood insurance program in Budget 2023 with CA input and engagement in the development phase.

Recommendation 7: That conservation authorities be eligible for programs and projects developed to further objectives of the Canada Water Agency.

Recommendation 8: That implementation decisions on the Freshwater Action Plan continue to support significant investment in the Great Lakes St Lawrence Region. Canada has a significant responsibility to ensure environmental, social, and economic sustainability of this globally significant freshwater resource.

Recommendation 9: That the Government provide funding to Indigenous peoples to build greater capacity to contribute to the work being achieved by the Government around the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

About Conservation Authorities

Conservation Ontario (CO) represents the network of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities (CAs). CAs are local, watershed-based, natural resource agencies located throughout the province. Almost all of Ontario's population (95%) lives in a watershed managed by CAs. Conservation authorities are legislated under Ontario's *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Conservation authorities have worked very successfully with the Federal Government for many years monitoring Ontario's watersheds and delivering a wide range of watershed management programs in the most populated province in Canada. Outcomes from these collaborations protect Great Lakes water quality, build local watershed resilience, and address growing climate impacts with nature-based solutions.



1. Addressing Climate Change Impacts

Climate change is the overriding challenge affecting Ontario's natural resources. It significantly magnifies all other threats to biodiversity and creates more frequent flooding and erosion hazards. This results in severe business and social disruptions, costly infrastructure damages, and threats to water quality.

Conservation Authorities are concerned about the quality and sustainability of our water and natural resources. We rely and build upon the science provided by Environment Climate Change Canada (monitoring, modeling and research), apply it locally, and offer solutions and actions that benefit the watersheds and water quality of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change

Conservation Ontario and the conservation authorities are grateful for support under the Nature Smart Climate Solutions program and the Nature Canada Fund. Protecting land and investing in habitat restoration, rehabilitation, and enhancement provides multiple co-benefits including: Great Lakes water quality; flood risk reduction; maintaining biodiversity; sequestering carbon; building climate resilience; and protecting air quality.

- 2021 – 2024 Nature Smart Climate Solutions Work of CAs
<https://conservationontario.ca/policy-priorities/climate-change/nature-based-climate-solutions>
 - Currently, 17 conservation authorities, are delivering 58 projects as nature-based solutions including GHG reductions.
- In the first two years (2021-2023):
 - 8938 hectares of enhanced land management practices implemented (cropland/cover crops);
 - 1198.4 hectares of wetlands and grasslands restored;
 - 286.3 hectares of land secured for conservation;
 - Conservation authorities have leveraged over 50 percent (\$9.5 M) of \$9M in ECCC funding.
- Canada Nature Fund
 - To date, working with 17 conservation authorities to acquire 1,933 hectares of lands for climate change adaptation.
 - Conservation authorities leveraged \$6.9 M provided by ECCC with a matching contribution of \$20.3M

We ask the Government to renew multi-year commitments to Conservation Ontario and conservation authorities under these two programs to continue advancing the work needed to address climate change.

We further request conservation authorities be eligible for funding under the National Adaptation Strategy and the Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan.

2 Billion Tree Program

Conservation authorities plant approximately 2 million trees across Ontario's watersheds annually. They also map and monitor local forest cover.

Conservation authority tree planting and habitat restoration/rehabilitation projects are delivered in partnership with other agencies, local businesses, and landowners. This allows leveraging of resources, resulting in broader benefits and impacts.

We are thankful for the funding CAs, who applied directly to the Program have received. We welcome additional opportunities, including for Conservation Ontario on behalf of the CA network, to receive funding required to support the 2 Billion Tree effort.



2. Protecting people and property from flooding and erosion hazards through floodplain mapping and infrastructure investments

Flood and Erosion Hazard and Disaster Risk Management

Flooding and erosion are costly and devastating climate change impact challenges.

Conservation authorities have proven success in partnering with the Federal Government to address flooding and erosion issues. Ongoing and additional funding under the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund and Natural Infrastructure Fund will enable CAs to continue to address the challenge of aging infrastructure, as well as the natural infrastructure required to keep flood and erosion hazards from becoming costly disasters. Conservation authority water and erosion control infrastructure already helps to avoid more than \$150 M in damages to residential properties annually.

Updated floodplain mapping is critical to guide development away from hazards and support forecast and warning and risk management decisions. Conservation authorities and Conservation Ontario appreciated engaging with Natural Resource Canada staff to shape the newly launched Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program launched in September. We are pleased to learn that FHIMP will continue beyond March 2024 and are greatly encouraged that the Government will continue this much-needed funding.

Further to the recently released Task Force on Flood Insurance and Relocation report *Adapting to Rising Flood Risk: An Analysis of Insurance Solutions Canadians* and as leaders in floodplain management, Conservation Ontario requests that the government establish a national high-risk flood insurance program in Budget 2023 with CA input and engagement in the development phase. Conservation authorities manage many areas of erosion along Great Lakes shorelines [these hazards threaten cottages and homes built prior to the development of CA regulations]. Today, the work of CAs prevents development in hazardous areas, and minimizes damage to existing development.

A number of other federal initiatives are important in addressing flood hazards and supporting flood insurance. While outside the scope of this submission, they are of high interest to Conservation Ontario and we welcome ongoing engagement on them. Initiatives include:

- Creating the Federal Flood Mapping Guideline Series, which includes establishing a community of practice;
- The Federal commitment to complete all flood maps in Canada;
- Promoting flood risk in Canada through a public-facing information portal;
- Measures to improve flood mitigation in communities at risk of recurrent flooding;
- Implementation of the recently announced Climate Resilient Coastal and Northern Communities Program; and
- Continued investment in hydrometric monitoring to support flood forecasting, warning and monitoring.

3. Protecting the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River water quality

Canada Water Agency

Conservation Ontario provided comments on the establishment of a Canada Water Agency and are supportive of its creation. We emphasize that an integrated watershed management framework (including watersheds, sub-watersheds and catchment basins) should be used as the framework for management of freshwater resources.

We request consideration for funding under new initiatives developed to further the objectives of the Canada Water Agency. Further, decisions around the implementation of the Freshwater Action Plan should continue to support significant investment in the Great Lakes St Lawrence Region.

Great Lakes / St. Lawrence River

Conservation authority watershed report cards align with results from the State of the Great Lakes 2022 report. The next report cards are being released in March 2023. Results show that water quality, forest conditions, and groundwater in the Great Lakes Basin remain unchanged, for now. There are exceptions. Conservation authorities' watershed management programs and projects support this status, but investment is needed to increase the scale, scope, and intensity of efforts given the growing impact of climate change and development intensification.

Increased support is needed for science and monitoring to identify on-the-ground actions. For example, studies of coastal processes under a changing climate to confirm the success of specific management actions such as replacing aging shoreline protection infrastructure with nature-based solutions. Watershed projects like buffer strip plantings, septic system upgrades, stormwater management, tree planting, shoreline/coastal projects, etc. all contribute to reducing or mitigating impacts on Great Lakes water quality.

Conservation authorities are keen to assist your government to meet its goals under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).

We congratulate the Government on the 50th anniversary of the GLWQA and the release of the 2022 State of the Great Lakes Report and the 2022 Progress Report. Conservation Ontario and many conservation authorities attended the Great Lakes Public Forum in September. We are encouraged by the participation of Indigenous peoples in this event. From this successful event, we recommend that the Government fund Indigenous peoples to support greater participation in implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and development of these reports.

Conclusion

Conservation Ontario and the 36 conservation authorities are effective partners for the Government. We bring considerable experience in watershed management to the policy tables and are experienced on-the-ground delivery organizations. Additional examples of this include: working around species at risk; contributing to agricultural best management practices and resilient landscapes; and working with Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Leveraging the Work of Conservation Authorities

Conservation authorities bring additional, valuable resources to projects by leveraging vast, long standing local, municipal and provincial partnerships. We work closely with property owners to plan, develop, and implement significant, practical, projects. When added up, these actions provide significant improvements to the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River region and its waters.

Conservation authorities' watershed management expertise ensures: effective delivery of programs, value for money, local buy-in, and a more meaningful impact than any one organization can achieve independently.

For Additional Information

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Wainfleet, Lake Erie



2023 Provincial Pre-Budget Consultation Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

Submitted by Conservation Ontario
February 13, 2023

Conservation Authority Programs Deliver Value for Provincial Investment

Conservation Authorities are boots on the ground delivery agents for the Province and Municipalities. Our delivery of flooding and erosion mitigation programs, the management of conservation lands, and drinking water source protection, are a few examples.

Conservation Authority programs: protect the Great Lakes and other water resources; support a healthy agricultural industry; protect water quality and quantity; and provide the local science and operations that help Ontarians be emergency prepared. Our integrated watershed management approach manages impacts to natural resources to ensure the long-term viability of our environment and economy.

Partnering with the Province and others, the Conservation Authorities contribute significantly to the health and well-being of residents by protecting safe drinking water sources, protecting lives and property from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion, and providing almost 300 conservation areas for 8 – 10 million annual visitors.

Conservation Authorities offer cost savings by working at the watershed scale.

Conservation Authorities are locally based, cost-efficient partners for the Province, particularly for key provincial environmental, economic and social policy priorities. Working at the watershed scale brings multiple levels of government and partners to the table to achieve greater results than any one organization could working independently. Three key areas of increased investment are recommended to enhance outcomes of these partnerships for the benefit of Ontarians.

1. Increase Investment in Natural Hazards Programs

Conservation Authorities are a **key implementing partner of *Protecting People and Property: Ontario's Flooding Strategy***. Flooding is the most costly natural hazard and the leading cause of public emergency in Ontario. For every dollar paid in insurance claims for damaged homes and businesses, the Insurance Bureau of Canada tells us that Canadian governments and taxpayers pay multiples more to repair public infrastructure that severe weather has damaged. These costs are rising as climate change impacts grow.

Flood and erosion events tell a cautionary tale for future planning and development decisions. Land use planning is a critical component of an integrated approach to flood risk management. Conservation Authority regulations and their participation in plan review keep development safely away from flooding and erosion. Conservation Authorities support the provincial housing strategy by improving planning application review and approval processes with Conservation Ontario's Client Service and Streamlining Initiative.

Conservation Authorities appreciate the Province's attention to this program including the timely management of the Federal Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP) projects. To continue to meet the growing challenges, however, Conservation Authorities need:

- ✓ continued and increased investment for local implementation of natural hazard programs;
- ✓ increased delivery of technical guideline support;
- ✓ continued and increased investment for the provincial Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECl) Program is needed for aging natural hazards infrastructure that prevents flooding and erosion. This risk-based program is delivered through a Municipal – Provincial – Conservation Authority partnership. Province provides \$5M with assistance from a Conservation Authority experts committee; Municipalities match this with another \$5M and Conservation Authorities implement the projects;
- ✓ continued funding for the Hydrometric Monitoring Network to support flood forecasting and advanced warnings for successful emergency response;
- ✓ new funding for the development of CA natural hazard asset management plans as required by changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*; and,
- ✓ provincial top up of current Federal natural disaster funding opportunities [e.g. Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) and Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program (FHIMP)] for additional infrastructure projects as well as floodplain mapping improvements.

2. Continue Multi-year Funding Model for Ontario Drinking Water Source Protection Program

Conservation Authorities are a **key implementing partner for the Ontario Drinking Water Source Program**. Conservation Ontario and the Conservation Authorities gratefully acknowledge the Province's commitment to two-year multi-year funding for the program. We are in year two of this commitment in 2023 and submit that this model is successful for both partners. We look forward to the Province's continued commitment.

3. Continued and increased investment in Great Lakes water quality programs

Conservation Authorities are a **key implementing partner for Ontario's Great Lakes Water Quality commitments**. Thirty-five of thirty-six Conservation Authorities' watersheds drain into the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River and twenty-six have Great Lakes coast and/or St. Lawrence River shoreline to manage for natural hazards (e.g. coastal flooding and erosion). Conservation Authority programs protect the Great Lakes which are a direct source of drinking water to 60 percent of Ontarians. Reducing nutrients and erosion from our watersheds and coastlines will improve Great Lakes water quality thus reducing algae that create taste and odour and, in some cases, toxins that we don't want in our drinking water.

To meet nutrient reduction targets, Conservation Authorities' Healthy Great Lakes / Rural Water Quality / Clean Water programs need a long-term commitment. It takes time to develop targeted action plans with the watershed community, to build support for conservation measures and to implement them. Continued investment is needed for science and monitoring to identify the most effective on-the-ground actions. Investment is needed to increase the scale, scope, and intensity of targeted actions given the growing impact of climate change and development intensification. Watershed projects like buffer strip plantings, septic system upgrades, tree planting, shoreline/coastal projects, etc. all contribute to reducing or mitigating impacts on Great Lakes water quality.

Outcomes Achieved in Partnership with Conservation Authorities.

- Reduced risk and costs from flooding events
- Less red tape and more sustainable growth under the provincial housing strategy

From January 1st – December 31st, 2021, the high-growth Conservation Authorities issued a combined total of 7533 permits, representing a 12% increase from 2020. The high-growth Conservation Authorities continue to be highly successful – issuing 91% of permits within the provincial timelines.

In 2021, 17 non-high-growth Conservation Authorities joined the annual reporting cycle, issuing a combined total of 4192 permits. These Conservation Authorities were similarly successful in their first year of reporting – with 93% of permits within the provincial timelines.

- Improved public health of Ontario residents and reduced healthcare costs through drinking water source protection and enabling people to be active in nature at over 300 conservation areas

Advantages of Working with Conservation Authorities

- ✓ Known and valued for their watershed-based approach to managing flooding & erosion
- ✓ Governed by member municipalities and fosters collective actions at the local and community level
- ✓ Ability to leverage partnerships for greater resources and broader outcomes

More Information

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