

2

OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ CONSERVATION PLAN WATERSHED PLANNING STUDIES

LSRCA AND TRCA PROGRESS REPORT TO DECEMBER 31, 2004

The Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends the following:

- 1. The presentation by Mike Walters, Director of Watershed Planning, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, and the document entitled “York Region ORMCP Watershed Planning Partnership Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Examples of 2004 Completed Activities”, be received; and**
- 2. The recommendations contained in the following report December 14, 2004, from the Commissioner of Planning and Development Services and Commissioner of Transportation and Works be adopted:**

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The semi-annual progress report on Watershed Planning studies to fulfill requirements of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), submitted by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA), and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), be received for information.
2. Regional staff continue to work with Conservation Authority staff to ensure the timely and cost efficient delivery of these watershed planning components required under the ORMCP.
3. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to area municipalities for information.
4. The next progress report be provided in September of 2005.

2. PURPOSE

This report is an to update Committee and Regional Council on the accomplishments of the LSRCA and TRCA for the balance of 2004 on Watershed Planning studies on the Oak Ridges Moraine as requested by Regional Council at its meeting of February 19, 2004.

3. BACKGROUND

The *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act, 2001* required that York Region and local municipalities bring their Official Plans and zoning bylaws (in the case of local municipalities) into conformity with the ORMCP by April 22, 2003 and October 22, 2003 respectively. This conformity date was achieved by the Region and has been achieved by area municipalities in the Region.

The ORMCP also contains several other critical target dates for the completion of Watershed Planning, including commencement of watershed planning for each watershed originating on the Moraine by April 22, 2003 (Section 24(1)); and completion of watershed plans by April 23, 2007.

LSRCA and TRCA have been active in developing and maintaining watershed plans in York Region for many years. With the introduction of the ORMCP, Regional staff and staff of the conservation authorities (CAs) together developed a comprehensive five year work plan to fulfill the ORMCP watershed planning requirements.

This workplan was adopted by Regional Council on February 19, 2004 with the request that the TRCA and the LSRCA provide semi-annual watershed planning progress reports to Committee and Council to ensure that significant progress is being made towards fulfilling the requirements of the ORMCP according to schedule and budget requirements.

The 2004 mid-year progress report for the authorities was considered by Planning and Economic Development Committee in September 2004.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

The watershed plan requirements of the ORMCP encompass a wide number of disciplines and the required watershed plans are expected to influence planning and development initiatives in and beyond York Region.

The update to the 5-year work plan is summarized below, with a more detailed listing of deliverables along with estimated and actual budget and expenditures to date in *Attachments 1 and 2*.

4.1 Highlights of the 2004 Watershed Planning Budget Year

4.1.1 Year End 2004 - Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

The LSRCA is undertaking work concurrently in all four of its watersheds originating on the Moraine to ensure compliance with ORMCP. This approach is more cost effective and guarantees that consistent protocols and procedures have been applied to each

subwatershed. Most of the work will focus on filling data gaps of existing watershed plans to bring them into conformity with the ORMCP.

The four LSRCA watersheds draining from the Oak Ridges Moraine in York Region are the West Holland River, East Holland River, Maskinonge River and the Black River (See Map *Attachment 3*). The expected completion date of all four watershed plans for these areas is 2006 to allow time for review and finalization before the 2007 deadline.

Significant progress has been made in completing proposed 2004 ORMCP activities. Work continued in 2004 to characterize the watersheds in the higher level of detail, scope and understanding required by the ORMCP and included collecting detailed information on ground and surface water quality and quantity, terrestrial natural heritage and the aquatic ecosystem.

Detailed highlights to December 31, 2004 are contained in *Attachment 1*.

4.1.2 Year End 2004 - Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

The four TRCA watersheds draining from the Oak Ridges Moraine in York Region include: Humber River Watershed, Don River Watershed, Rouge River Watershed, and Duffins Creek Watershed (See Map *Attachment 4*). Watershed planning studies have been completed to various degrees in all four watersheds through partnerships between the TRCA, its member municipalities, and the community. The approach to fulfilling the ORMCP requirements has focussed on filling information gaps on existing watershed planning studies in order to meet the requirements of the ORMCP and to address the needs of each watershed and its community.

The final delivery of each of these watershed plan updates is staggered between the end of 2005 and the end of 2006 to allow time for review and finalization before the 2007 deadline.

Detailed highlights of the accomplishments as of December 31, 2004 are contained in *Attachment 2*.

4.2 Next Steps for the 2005 Watershed Planning Year - Highlights

The following provides an overview of activities planned for 2005 with a more detailed description listed in *Attachments 1 and 2*.

Several new provincial initiatives, including the proposed Greenbelt Plan, the Places to Grow Discussion Paper and the anticipated Drinking Water Source Protection Act are being monitored carefully by Regional, LSRCA and TRCA staff with respect to their potential impacts on land use and watershed planning activities.

4.2.1 Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

During 2005, watershed planning activities will focus on the following in all four watersheds:

- Detailed geomorphic assessment of the watersheds.

- Watershed based analysis of fisheries, benthics, temperature, baseflow and water use assessment.
- Development of Terms of Reference and approach to developing an Integrated Ecosystem Framework approach to evaluate proposed water takings.
- Complete subwatershed wide terrestrial natural heritage analysis and updates where required.
- Water budgets completed and finalized for all watersheds.
- Development of a micro-website outlining, distribution of a newsletter as part of public involvement/engagement process and public open houses.
- Begin process of consolidating all technical information and development of report formats, map standards and associated products.

This list captures all the primary activities planned for 2005. There are some minor projects and activities specific to individual watersheds, which will be described and reported on, in the 2005 Mid-Year report.

Please see *Attachment 1* for more details on the LSRCA's 2005 next steps.

4.2.2 Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

During 2005, work will focus on the following activities:

- Rouge Watershed: prepare a full draft watershed plan.
- Humber Watershed: complete modelling and analysis and prepare a preliminary watershed plan.
- Don Watershed: updated report on current conditions.
- Duffins: Completion of model policy to guide implementation of the plan.

Please see *Attachment 2* for more details on the TRCA's 2005 next steps.

4.3 Outlook for the Remaining Watershed Planning Program to 2007

4.3.1 Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

The overall program endorsed by Council in February 2004 is on schedule and no difficulties are anticipated at this time. The comprehensive approach adopted by the LSRCA ensures a timely transition from characterization through implementation on all four watersheds.

Primary data collection activities to inventory natural features and understand their functions will be completed in 2005. Detailed modelling of the natural heritage features and surface water quantity and quality will continue in 2005 involving the evaluation of various future growth and rehabilitation scenarios. The results of the modelling analyses will be used in the development of management plans for the four watersheds, which will be the primary focus in the latter half of 2006. These efforts will culminate in 2007 with the development of watershed implementation plan including potential rehabilitation projects and policies for the ORMCP Area. The draft policies will be provided to the stakeholder municipalities to be incorporated, where appropriate, in York Region and local area municipal official plans.

4.3.2 Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

The approved workplan sets out the annual activities, necessary to fulfill the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan's watershed planning requirements by early 2007. All activities appear to be proceeding as planned and are on track to meet the final completion dates for the watershed plans.

As reported in the September 2004 progress report, delays in assembling the required data and preparing models for the Rouge watershed and Humber watershed surface water flow and water quality modelling/analysis studies have delayed those projects by approximately four months. Due to the nature of the integrated watershed plan, these delays in turn cause delays in other inter-related study components (e.g. groundwater and aquatic systems) which rely on this data also. However, as reported in September, these delays allowed access to several improved databases that will enhance the final products and should not affect the end-date for delivery of the overall watershed plans.

4.3.3. Water Budget Analysis and Conservation Plan Component of the ORMCP

Section 24 of the ORMCP requires that the Region prepare water budget analysis and conservation plans as part of watershed planning efforts.

At the time the ORMCP was filed, the Region was in year five of the proactive *Water for Tomorrow* program.

In an extension of their role in overseeing the *Water for Tomorrow* program, United Utilities Canada Limited (UUCL) are working with LSRCA and TRCA and York Region to develop watershed-specific water conservation programs to meet the water conservation requirements of the ORMCP.

Water for Tomorrow is in its seventh year and is currently saving 22.4 million litres of water per day across the Region. The water savings have been achieved by toilet flapper and showerhead replacements, industrial and institutional audits, distribution leakage reduction and education.

The initial stage of the Water Conservation Plan Component of the ORMCP was to evaluate the impact that the *Water for Tomorrow* program has had on the Yonge Street Aquifer study area. This evaluation will be completed with the return of water usage surveys sent out to the Local Municipalities and an update will be provided at the next semi-annual progress report in September 2005.

In addition to the evaluation of municipal water usage and conservation, water usage from non-municipal supply is currently under review and being categorized by market sector and end-use.

Of prime importance to the Water Conservation Plan are the results of the Water Budget Analysis which will provide a view to the current situation in the study area and the priority of water efficiency in an overall management plan.

In a June 2003 report to Regional Council, we noted that the LSRCA and TRCA had been working with York Region to deliver the water budget and water conservation plan for the area served by the Yonge Street Aquifer by April 2004 as required by Section 24 (7) of the ORMCP. At that time, we requested that the Ministry of Environment extend the deadlines for completion of work on the Yonge Street Aquifer from April 22, 2004 until one year after the release of all relevant technical guidance documents.

We note at this time that the Province's technical guidelines are still outstanding. In the absence of this guidance the technical teams have continued to work on developing defensible water budgets and provided a draft summary of this work to York Region to address the April 22, 2004 requirements. York Region intends to direct LSRCA to finalize the water budget once the provincial guidance has been provided.

A broad list of potential water efficiency measures has been developed and will be evaluated for technical and economic feasibility once the results of the Water Budget Analysis are available.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budgets for these projects in 2005 are consistent with that approved by Committee when this initiative was started in 2004 and that this is reflected in the 2005 Transportation and Works Capital Budget.

An itemized list of deliverables, estimated budgets and incurred costs are provided in *Attachments 1 and 2*.

Table 1 provides an estimate of the expected costs of watershed planning over the next 4 years.

Table 1
Five -year Watershed Planning Budget Estimates

Conservation Authority	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total Work Plan Length 2003-2007
LSRCA	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$360,000	\$260,000	\$250,000	\$1,760,000
TRCA	\$330,000	\$600,000	\$500,000	\$400,000	\$200,000	\$2,030,000
Total	\$630,000	\$1,200,000	\$860,000	\$660,000	\$450,000	\$3,790,000

These annual budget estimates will be confirmed each year during yearly budget discussions and allocations to the CAs. For the period from 2003 to 2007 funds these projects are funded as special Capital Projects from Regional water rates. After 2007, funding for watershed planning will solely be funded under normal operating allowance to the Conservation Authorities from the Region's tax levy.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Local municipalities have been invited to actively participate in the watershed planning process through advisory committees and during policy formulation. Ultimately, implementation of the objectives and principles of watershed plans may be implemented through amendments to Regional and/or local planning documents.

7. CONCLUSION

Watershed planning work is well advanced in the Region and the CA's work plans are well underway at this time with no significant issues or delays expected at this time.

While Regional staff is confident that the target dates for completion will be met, it should be noted that the Province has not yet provided the anticipated technical guidelines that will detail specific technical requirements under the ORMCP including water budget requirements.

Funds for the 2005 budget year were included in the 2005 Transportation and Works budget and funds to 2007 are included in the 10 year Capital Plan. Funding for watershed planning activities after 2007 will proceed through the normal Regional/CA budget allocation and approval process.

In order to ensure that efforts remain on track, the Conservation Authorities will continue to provide semi-annual updates to Committee on the workplan elements.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachments referred to in this clause are attached to this report.)