

LAKEHEAD REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2023 – 2027



LAKEHEAD REGION
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

*Conserve Today...
for a Better Tomorrow*



LAKEHEAD REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) is a community-based environmental non-profit agency that provides for the organization and delivery of programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development, and management of natural resources within the Lakehead Watershed. The LRCA was formed in 1963 by the expansion of the Neebing Valley Conservation Authority, which was constituted in 1954.

As legislated, the LRCA provides mandatory programs that manage the risk of natural hazards, manage lands owned by the Authority, protect sources of municipal drinking water and monitor groundwater and surface water; administers programs at the request of a municipality; and provides programs that the LRCA considers to be beneficial to the watershed, such as stewardship and educational programming. Using the initiatives set out in the Strategic Plan, the LRCA looks forward to working with our partners and the community to achieve our Vision and Mission.

VISION

A healthy, safe and sustainable Lakehead Watershed for future generations.

MISSION

To lead the conservation and protection of the Lakehead Watershed.

FOUR PRIORITIES OF THE FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



CONSERVE & SUSTAIN

Enhance the management and sustainability of natural habitats and ecosystems through an integrated approach.



PROTECT & SUPPORT

Safeguard people, property and communities through robust watershed management.



CONNECT & EXPLORE

Maximize intergenerational educational, engagement, and recreational opportunities through strong collaborations.



GOVERN & ENHANCE

Distinguish the organization as a leader in environmentally-sustainable practices and responsible stewardship.



MESSAGE FROM SENIOR LEADERSHIP

As we embark on the next five-year Strategic Plan and reflect on the accomplishments under the Authority's first ever Strategic Plan, it is clear that the Authority continues to be committed to working towards our Vision and Mission. The past five years of work laid a solid foundation for the next five years. We have accomplished a lot within the first five years, but there is much more to do as we continue to face challenges to the natural environment and challenges to our political environment, with recent changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and related regulations.

The 2023-2027 Strategic Plan continues the initial priorities with updated initiatives that will shape the Authority's direction over the next five years. This trail map provides a focus on the continual protection of natural hazards, natural heritage and ecosystems, in partnership with the community and organizations. It also focuses on continuing to foster the public's connection to the land through opportunities to experience nature, while committing to sustainable management and reinvestment in our lands.

The Authority continues to remain committed to accountable and transparent governance, along with maintaining a stable financial model, that maximizes continually seeking additional funding, to lessen the financial burden on our member municipalities. Additionally, a strong commitment to the well being of staff, will result in the Authority positioning the organization as an employer of choice.

As we move forward over the next five years, we will strive to continue to provide programming that makes a positive impact in the watershed, both on the land and water, and on the people we serve.

Donna Blunt
Chair, Board of Directors

Tammy Cook
Chief Administrative Officer

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority respectfully acknowledges that the lands on which we live and work are the traditional lands of the Anishinabek Nation and the traditional territory of Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.

As partners in the conservation and protection of the Lakehead Watershed along with First Nations communities, the Métis Nation of Ontario, and other Indigenous peoples, the LRCA is committed to the common vision of a healthy, safe and sustainable Lakehead Watershed.



CONSERVE & SUSTAIN

Enhance the management and sustainability of natural habitats and ecosystems through an integrated approach.

INITIATIVES

- Engage stakeholders, the environmental community, and our watershed residents in a collective effort to protect, restore, and enhance our local environment through stewardship programs, strategies, and best management and sustainable practices.
- Manage land holdings through systemic evaluations, inventories, and strategies.
- Collaborate and partner with agencies and community organizations to take action in the protection of natural habitats and ecosystems, share decision-making, and address emerging issues that impact the health and sustainability of the Lakehead watershed.
- Increase the availability of data and knowledge to our partners and the public.

8 Member
Municipalities

+2,700 km²
Area of Jurisdiction

+151,000
Trees planted through
the Private Landowners
Tree Seedling
Assistance Program



PROTECT & SUPPORT

Safeguard people, property and communities through robust watershed management.

INITIATIVES

- Increase capacity to issue relevant and timely flood messaging by utilizing technology and best practices to enhance the flood-readiness of our partners.
- Create and update policies, guidance documents and technical data to streamline the LRCA approvals process that provides transparency of process and rules of service.
- Continue maintaining and enhancing flood control infrastructure in an effort to minimize the impacts of riverine flooding, erosion, and sedimentation.
- Prioritize and promote the protection and management of natural hazards, wetlands and natural heritage features within the LRCA Area of Jurisdiction.
- Promote and implement programs to alleviate the impacts of climate change, habitat degradation, and threats to biodiversity.
- Align watershed decision-making with stakeholders both within and outside of the jurisdiction.

9 Streamflow Gauges

11 Precipitation Gauges

3 Snow Survey Sites

Riverine flood protection provided by Neebing-McIntyre Floodway to the lower Neebing River and Intercity Areas



CONNECT & EXPLORE

Maximize intergenerational educational, engagement, and recreational opportunities through strong collaborations.

INITIATIVES

- Provide spaces, opportunities and experiences that focus on physical and mental well-being through a connection to the land.
- Engage diverse stakeholders through effective communications, outreach, and education initiatives.
- Grow partnerships, collaborations and relationships with new and existing partners who share the LRCA's Vision and Mission.
- Manage and enhance recreational areas for current and future generations through robust land management, efficient maintenance programs and reinvestment in the land.

+500,000

visitors to our
Conservation
Areas annually

10

Conservation
Areas in the
Lakehead Region

+2,500

hectares of
land, including
Conservation
Areas, Forest
Management
Properties,
floodplain
lands, nature
reserves and
undeveloped
holdings



GOVERN & ENHANCE

Distinguish the organization as a leader in environmentally-sustainable practices and responsible stewardship.

INITIATIVES

- Continue to commit to accountable and transparent organizational governance.
- Find and implement efficiencies and streamline processes across all program areas.
- Maintain a stable model of financial resiliency based on capacity, capabilities, and public expectations by maximizing new funding opportunities, fundraising and self-generated revenue.
- Build upon and nurture a healthy, diverse, and positive workplace through a dynamic culture of learning, safety, inclusion, and mental well-being.
- Continue to work with Indigenous partners and community members to incorporate traditional knowledge and practices into programming and organizational decision-making.
- Build organizational capacity to provide new and developing program areas.

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Conservation Authorities
on the Lake Superior
shoreline

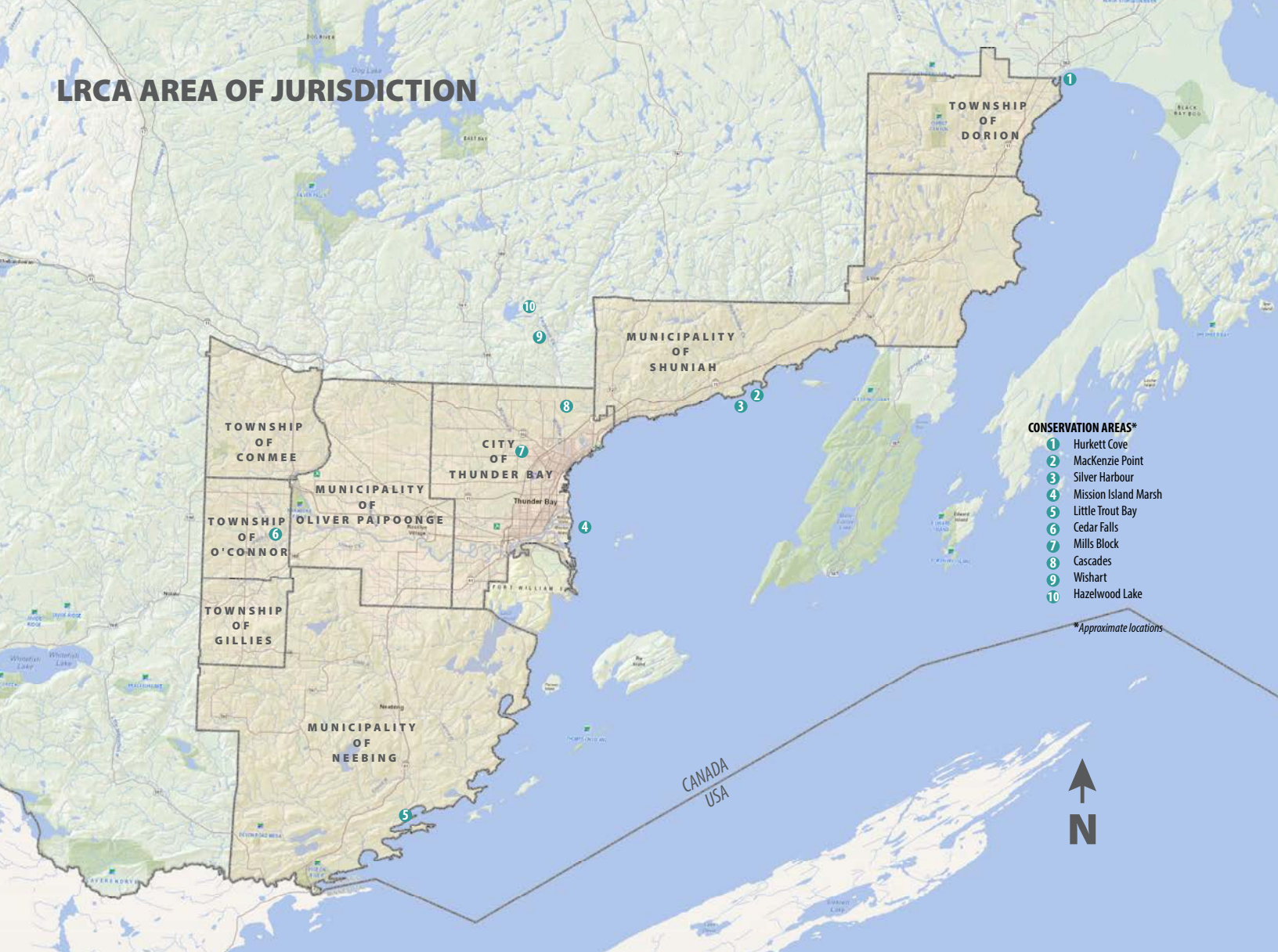
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Conservation Authorities
in Northern Ontario

1 of 36

Conservation Authorities
in the Province of Ontario

LRCA AREA OF JURISDICTION



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