



Conservation ONTARIO
Natural Champions

Fact Sheet

Conservation Ontario

- Conservation Ontario (CO) is a non-governmental organization that represents the common interests of the network of the 36 Conservation Authorities (CAs) in Ontario.
- Conservation Ontario is governed by a Council comprised of elected and appointed municipal officials from CA Boards of Directors and CA staff. Conservation Ontario is funded by the Conservation Authorities.

Conservation Authorities (CAs)

- Conservation Authorities are local, science-based, community organizations that manage natural resources on a watershed basis across Ontario. Conservation Authorities were created over 55 years ago and are legislated under the Conservation Authorities Act.
- Conservation Authorities have a strong track record of partnering with municipal, provincial and federal governments to deliver community based, practical solutions to a range of natural resource problems.
- Almost 90 per cent of the Ontario population (approx 10 million people) lives in watersheds managed by Conservation Authorities.
- Conservation Authorities vary in size from smaller operations managing one or two watersheds to larger operations managing one larger or several adjoining watersheds. CAs are governed by individual Boards of Directors whose members are comprised of municipally elected and appointed officials, and other stakeholders.
- Conservation Authorities are funded primarily through self generated fees and municipal levies. Additional sources of funding for CAs include some provincial/federal grants/contracts.

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- Based on Ontario's system of watersheds, Conservation Authorities are known globally for their stewardship of our rivers, lakes and streams through the development and delivery of comprehensive science-based programs that work with nature to protect, restore and effectively manage Ontario's water resources. In addition to serving Ontario watershed residents and landowners, Conservation Authorities also provide advice and technical assistance to all levels of government on the responsible management of water and land resources.
- Because what we do on land is reflected in our water, Conservation Authorities develop programs to protect the urban and rural lands, including sustainable and accountable agriculture, tourism and woodland industries. In addition, Conservation Authorities improve our quality of life by actively providing open space and recreational opportunities, as well as restoring and protecting aquatic and natural habits.
- The types of programs and services offered by conservation authorities include:
 - ✓ Watershed Strategies & management
 - ✓ Flooding and erosion control
 - ✓ Water quality and quantity
 - ✓ Reforestation and sustainable woodlot management
 - ✓ Ecosystem regeneration
 - ✓ Environmental education and information programming
 - ✓ Sensitive land acquisition
 - ✓ Outdoor recreation
 - ✓ Soil conservation
 - ✓ Environmental land use planning
 - ✓ Habitat protection & restoration
 - ✓ Agricultural and rural landowner assistance
 - ✓ Sensitive wetlands, flood plains, valley lands protection.
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