

# Conservation Matters

2020 **ANNUAL REPORT**





## Message from the Chair, Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer

In a year like no other, 2020 highlighted the vital role that Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) fulfills for our communities within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and demonstrated how conservation matters.

Amid the COVID-19 global health pandemic that caused major disruptions to our residents, businesses, and government partners, TRCA continued to seamlessly deliver our essential services and community supported programs. Across our jurisdiction TRCA maintained the pace of delivery for flood and erosion prevention works, trails, and restoration projects. Using niche machinery including our watercraft, drones, updated LiDAR and GIS data, our teams continued our work to monitor the natural environment, protect and upgrade aging infrastructure, while constructing new trail linkages to meet the growing recreation and active transportation demands within our communities. At the same time, TRCA's inter-disciplinary experts on our permit review teams supported our economy while mitigating and protecting the natural environment through the issuance of over 1,000 permits for development and infrastructure projects. By developing and enforcing strict COVID-19 safety protocols and leveraging recent information technology investments, TRCA demonstrated its ability to continue critical work, both remotely and in the field, resulting in strengthened relationships with partner municipalities, government agencies and industry.

From March onwards, COVID-19 directives prompted residents to visit our conservation lands at an unprecedented rate and TRCA's greenspaces provided residents with a safe and enjoyable way to safely explore their communities and connect with nature. As more Ontarians looked close to home for their vacation and recreation needs, TRCA's parks and trails were busier than ever. In addition, when the province restricted in-person learning, without missing a beat, our education programmers adapted to virtual delivery in response to changing learning needs to provide much needed online educational opportunities. Thanks to the tireless and award winning efforts of our staff, we were delighted to see GTA residents embrace their role as watershed stewards and engage in safe and meaningful activities including smaller scale community plantings, virtual information sharing forums, and online events all while adhering to government directives.

TRCA also worked successfully with our municipal partners to secure significant funds in the form of federal Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund support to address infrastructure needs including necessary works in Toronto's Rockcliffe community and for the Downtown Brampton Flood Protection project. This vital federal support was matched with municipal funding to create a combined \$145 million dollar investment in these two projects alone which will allow TRCA and its partners to move forward on detailed design and implementation.

In the fall, when the provincial government introduced sweeping changes to both the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CA Act) and *Planning Act* in Bill 229, TRCA vocally endorsed the changes related to transparency and accountability, but did everything in its power to advise the Province on our pragmatic concerns regarding governance, planning, permitting and enforcement. Through our efforts, some of our concerns, including ensuring our continued role in land use planning around natural hazards,

flexibility to deliver programs supported by government partners, and clearer enforcement provisions were successfully addressed. However, the final legislation raises unprecedented challenges particularly with new measures that require conservation authorities to issue CA Act permits for development projects if they have previously received a *Planning Act* Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) approval.

While new MZO provisions in the CA Act make our work to protect our watersheds more challenging, TRCA will continue to operate in a manner that reflects the best available science and professional standards in our permit reviews. In addition, through our role on the Province's Working Group on CA Act regulations we will share our best practices and advice to help shape the future regulations.

TRCA is thankful to partner municipalities, in addition to our vast network of residents, businesses, professional associations, not-for-profit organizations and other stakeholders throughout our jurisdiction for their unwavering encouragement and support of our actions and our collaborative approach. The outpouring of support last year demonstrated that the people of Ontario understand the important impact of our conservation initiatives. It is in this spirit of togetherness that TRCA will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to promote responsible development that will protect our important greenspaces, watersheds, and the Lake Ontario shoreline as we work together to build more sustainable and resilient communities.

As in past years, TRCA's 2020 Annual Report showcases our important work and highlights our successes. In the following pages you will find a wealth of evidence about the important role we play in our communities. TRCA remains committed as ever to protecting lives and property, preserving, and restoring our region's natural heritage, and providing safe and healthy programs and activities in our communities.

Through our partnerships, award winning programs and projects such as the Meadoway, the Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program, Monarch Nation and others, TRCA remains at the forefront of change in applying our science based approach and best practices to protect and restore natural systems and to reduce our ecological impact. With the support of our partners and stakeholders, we look forward to continuing to demonstrate how TRCA's important work matters in protecting our communities and our shared natural environment.



**John MacKenzie**  
Chief Executive Officer

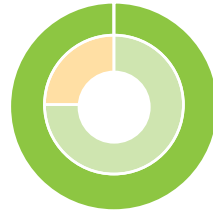


**Jennifer Innis**  
Chair, TRCA Board of Directors

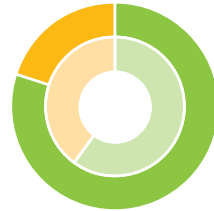
# Progress on Strategic Accomplishments (2018-2022)

In November 2018, TRCA's Board of Directors approved a Five-Year Update to Building the Living City 2013-2022 Strategic Plan with the addition of measures and outcomes. The following outlines TRCA's progress in 2019 (inside) and 2020 (outside) on achieving strategic plan objectives.

**1 - Green the Toronto region's economy**



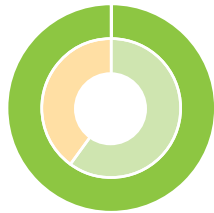
**7 - Build partnerships and new business models**



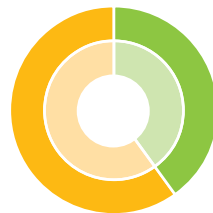
**2 - Manage our regional water resources for current and future generations**



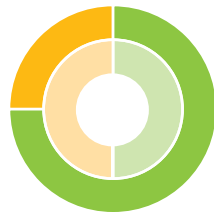
**8 - Gather and share the best sustainability knowledge**



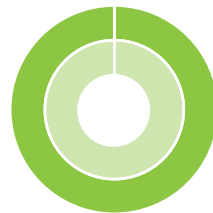
**3 - Rethink greenspace to maximize its value**



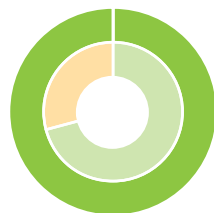
**9 - Measure performance**



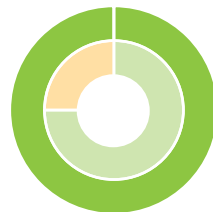
**4 - Create complete communities that integrate nature and the built environment**



**10 - Accelerate innovation**



**5 - Foster sustainable citizenship**



**11 - Invest in our staff**



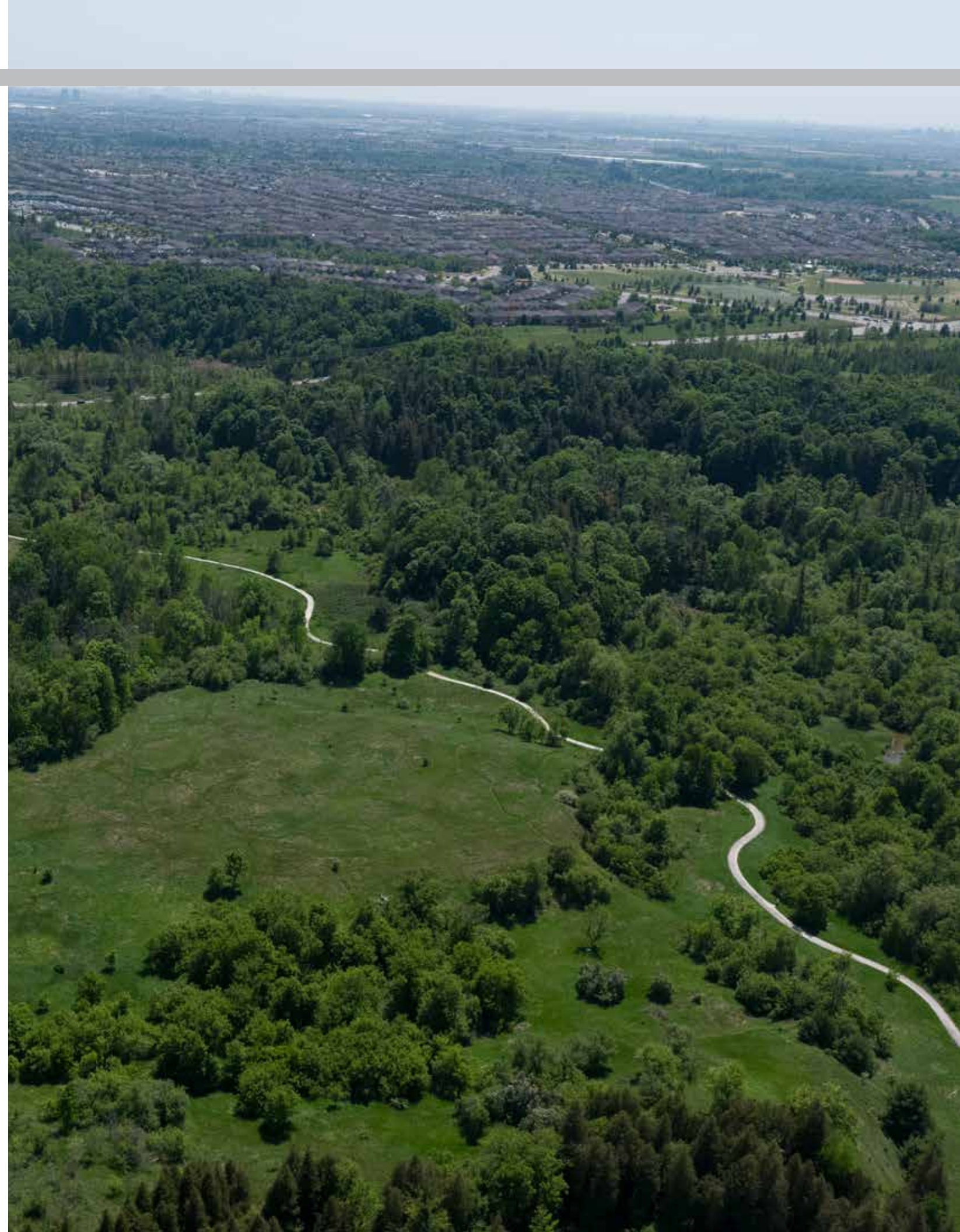
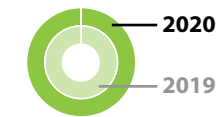
**6 - Tell the story of the Toronto region**



**12 - Facilitate a region-wide approach to sustainability**



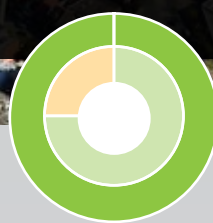
■ Project/Program is started and on track
 ■ Project/Program has an issue identified
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# 1 Green the Toronto region's economy



Supporting the transition to a strong, green economy continues to be a critical priority for TRCA's partners. Long-term prosperity in the jurisdiction and global sustainability requires industries, businesses and consumers to achieve planned employment and economic objectives while reducing the environmental footprint of the economy. It is also important to recognize that the green infrastructure industry and restoration economy, of which TRCA is a part, makes major contributions to regional economic development and community wellbeing.



## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Be at the forefront of providing input into the development of provincial and municipal policies and guidelines relating to land use and environmental planning and sustainable development related to TRCA's core objectives.

Seize opportunities for integrating more sustainable technologies and sustainable development certifications in the design and construction of new development and in retrofits of existing communities in the jurisdiction.

Expand TRCA's fee-for-service work for governmental, private sector and not-for-profit stakeholders, to facilitate the efficient delivery of green infrastructure and sustainability projects in areas of TRCA expertise.

Expand the Partners in Project Green Eco-Zone program to include emerging employment areas across the jurisdiction subject to partner funding.

■ Project/Program is started and on track ■ Project/Program has an issue identified ■ Project/Program has not yet commenced

● 2019 progress status ● 2020 progress status

## Technologies Evaluated

**13** technologies were evaluated by the Sustainable Technologies Evaluation Program (STEP) including bioswales constructed as part of the City of Markham's Green Road Pilot Project and a smart control dual fuel heat pump installed at the Archetype Sustainable House. This technology promises enhanced energy efficiency and significantly lower carbon emissions than comparable conventional systems.

## Sustainable Communities

STEP completed an assessment of barriers and opportunities associated with micro-housing in the GTA, shedding light on an important strategy for addressing housing affordability and the need for intensification in Toronto and other Canadian cities. Findings were subsequently disseminated through **3** knowledge sharing events attended by **130** participants.

## Green and Natural Infrastructure

TRCA partnered with The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and Ryerson University on a research project examining the role trees play in building climate change resilience. This research found that increasing tree canopy by **80%** can reduce extreme heat by 2°C and make it feel up to 11°C cooler.

## Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program (SNAP)

Secured **32** new partnerships totaling over **80** active partnerships to help deliver neighbourhood-based solutions for urban renewal and climate action. **3** new SNAP action plans completed or initiated this year making a total of **7** active SNAPs underway. **8** green infrastructure projects implemented on public and private land including: **320** trees planted; **1,000** shrubs; **400** native plants; and **100 m<sup>2</sup>** pavement removed, plus **84** microgreen balcony garden kits distributed. Engaged **878** participants in **32** workshops and events.

## Provincial Policy

Responded to **23** Environmental Registry of Ontario postings, in addition to working with the Province and other stakeholders on responses to the proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act under Bill 229, Schedule 6*.

## Private Erosion Hazards

**317** private property hazard sites were inspected as part of TRCA's Erosion Risk Management Program, a **7%** increase over 2019.

## Sustainable Community Award – National Recognition

TRCA and **9** participating partner municipalities have been recognized by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) with an Honourable Mention for SNAP. SNAP initiatives include home retrofits for climate preparedness, infrastructure renewal projects that incorporate greater environmental functions, and urban agriculture installations, to name just a few.

## Supporting our Regional Partners

STEP supported the Region of Peel in their efforts to enhance LID implementation and operation by working in partnership with Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) to develop **10** standard operating procedures for LID/stormwater practices and identifying and implementing LID retrofits as part of the Peel State of Good Repair project.

Through Partners in Project Green participants and SNAP neighborhood residents, over **100** projects and **600** sustainability actions were implemented achieving:



**1,720**  
plants and trees  
planted



**37,000**  
kilograms of material  
diverted from landfills



**380**  
million litres of  
water use offset



**28**  
million ekWh  
reduced



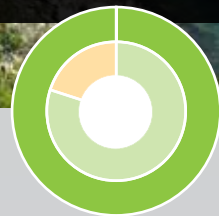
**3,900**  
tonnes eCO2  
avoided

# 2 Manage our regional water resources for current and future generations



Clean water is a precious and limited resource that needs to be valued and protected. Flooding, urban development and unsustainable agricultural and industrial practices continue to negatively impact rivers, streams and Lake Ontario. To safeguard drinking water supply, the health of aquatic ecosystems, and to protect communities from flooding, TRCA must continue working with its municipal partners to prioritize the protection, restoration, and safe management of water resources.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)



Develop a bold work plan that includes TRCA's Erosion and Hazard Mitigation Strategy comprising over \$500 million in projects to address known erosion, flooding and required infrastructure upgrades at over 250 sites.

Engage with local communities to increase awareness about issues facing water resources and their importance to the health and well-being of the jurisdiction.

Work with municipal partners to implement flood remediation, erosion monitoring, maintenance work, stormwater system retrofits, low impact developments, green infrastructure, and water quality and habitat restoration projects to realize more sustainable developments (e.g. The Port Lands, Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, Brampton Riverwalk, Markham Centre).

Monitor the health of the watersheds through the Regional Watershed Monitoring Program and through work with academic institutions.

Reduce flood risks and protect communities through continuous improvements to TRCA's flood forecasting and warning program.

■ Project/Program is started and on track ■ Project/Program has an issue identified ■ Project/Program has not yet commenced

● 2019 progress status ● 2020 progress status

## Highland Creek Salmon Festival

TRCA moved forward with a virtual Salmon Festival this year engaging **2,011** Facebook users, **420** Instagram and **8,079** YouTube viewers.

## Management of Invasive Species

### SEA LAMPREY

**966** invasive Sea Lamprey were caught and removed from **2** traps in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The number of Sea Lamprey captured in the Humber trap in 2020 was significantly lower than previous years. This may be due to water temperatures this spring, higher lake levels or the attractiveness of other rivers for spawning Sea Lamprey. Regardless of the cause - this is good news!

### ASIAN CARP

**112** sites were sampled through the Asian Carp Early Detection program in Frenchman's Bay, Duffins Creek, Rouge River and Humber River Coastal Marshes. **80** sites at the Toronto Islands were added in 2020, representing a **40%** increase in sampling effort over 2019. No Asian Carp were found - this is good news! This project is being completed in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada through their Aquatic Invasive Species Program.

## Floodline Mapping

Over **250** map sheets and **5** new hydraulic models were completed as part of the flood plain mapping updates for the Mimico Creek, Highland Creek, Duffins Creek, and the remainder of the Rouge and Don River watersheds.

## Source Water Protection

Over **5,500** drinking water threats have been resolved to date in the Credit Valley, Toronto and Region, and Central Lake Ontario (CTC) Source Protection Region.

## Erosion Risk Management Program

Erosion Risk Management staff inspected **4,678** hazard sites or erosion control structures. **2,088 m** of valley and shoreline have been stabilized at **16** high priority sites.

## Stormwater Management

In partnership with the City of Toronto, **2,501 m<sup>3</sup>** of sediment removed at **5** stormwater management ponds.

## Ecosystem and Climate Science

TRCA provided expertise over **50** separate times in the form of presentations at conferences, stakeholder groups, and other knowledge sharing events.



## Ashbridges Bay

TRCA, in partnership with the City of Toronto (Toronto Water), is undertaking the Ashbridges Bay Treatment Plant Landform Project, which is located on the north shore of Lake Ontario, east of Tommy Thompson Park. The purpose of the project is to protect infrastructure and to address the existing navigation risk caused by sediment accumulation at the harbour entrance of Coatsworth Cut while considering approved projects and waterfront planning initiatives in the area, manage shoreline erosion along the northeast shore of Tommy Thompson Park, and provide enhancements to aquatic habitat.

There are three distinct elements to the project:

- **16.4 ha** landform protected by an armourstone headland-cobble beach system and rip rap revetment;
- **710 m** long central breakwater; and
- **100 m** long east breakwater.

Construction began in January 2020, and crews have been working tirelessly through unfavorable weather conditions. By adopting TRCA COVID-19 field measures, crews have made great progress despite the limitations of a global pandemic in order to complete the Cell 1 and Cell 2 confinement berms. In early 2021, crews will focus on constructing the armourstone headlands that will provide protection for the outer confinement berms. Construction of the central breakwater is currently scheduled to begin in July 2021.

# 3 Rethink greenspace to maximize its value



The extensive ravine network and greenspace system of the Toronto region, which provides linkages through communities and nature experiences within minutes of Toronto's downtown and Urban Growth Centres throughout the jurisdiction, is key to the region's appeal and prosperity. Evidence from around the world increasingly demonstrates a clear connection between greenspace and the health and well-being of communities. As the population of the region continues to grow rapidly, TRCA needs to sustain, improve, expand, and program the system of protected greenspace in order to meet the needs of communities while protecting natural heritage.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Achieve the most appropriate use of TRCA's inventory of lands and facilities while respecting cultural heritage and environmental values.

Invest in aging infrastructure across TRCA's Conservation Areas and public spaces in order to provide safe, accessible, and functional facilities to the public.

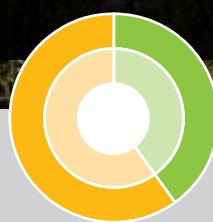
Secure, restore, and where appropriate, provide more accessible greenspace as part of the technical review of proposed projects and plans.

Update TRCA's Terrestrial Natural Heritage System Strategy, the Regional Trail System Strategy, TRCA's Living City Policies and their associated technical guidelines to inform reviews of projects and the timely execution of projects.

Advance priority greenspace and community initiatives of Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation (TRCF), member municipalities and partners on priority projects such as The Meadowway, Tommy Thompson Park, Bolton Camp Redevelopment, and Black Creek Pioneer Village revitalization.

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## Trail Users

**121,021** visitors were recorded at key TRCA locations across the jurisdiction, a **35%** increase over 2019. **2** new trail counters were installed in 2020, which recorded **193,533** additional visitors.

## Carruthers Creek Watershed Plan

Despite in person Public Open Houses being put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TRCA received and responded to many comments from stakeholders on the draft Carruthers Creek Watershed Plan. Staff also delivered **3** virtual presentations to promote the findings of the plan.

## Tree Planting

Planted **41,389** trees and shrubs to create **21.46 ha** of new forest on privately owned land.

## Invasive Species Management Strategy

Endorsed by Board of Directors, establishing priority actions to effectively and efficiently manage invasive species. In 2020, **87 ha** of land was assessed for invasive species.



## The Meadowway

The Meadowway, located in Scarborough, will revitalize **16** linear kilometres of hydro corridor between the Don River Ravine and the Rouge National Urban Park, transforming it into a vibrant stretch of urban greenspace with multi-use trails and meadowlands. Accomplishments this year include: **32 ha** of site prep for new meadow habitat, **30 ha** of native meadow seeding, **68 ha** of maintenance and adaptive management, **13 ha** of existing meadow maintenance mowing, **31 ha** of buffer mowing around the existing meadow, **4.62 ha** of infill seeding, **68** monitoring plots, **18** bird and butterfly transects, **54** water infiltration tests, **878** native bee monitoring sample sites were completed.

### National Awards

TRCA is thrilled to be this year's recipient of the prestigious "Reach Out" Brownie Award for The Meadowway. The Canadian Urban Institute's Brownie Award recognizes innovative rehabilitation efforts by organizations focusing on under-utilized and underdeveloped spaces by remaking them into projects that contribute to healthy communities.

The Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) also honoured the Meadowway project with a National Award of Excellence for planning and analysis related to the visualization toolkit. The CSLA was impressed by the toolkit's hi-tech and sophisticated animations, augmented reality, videos and renderings which allow users to immerse themselves in the future Meadowway.

### The High Line Network

The Meadowway is only the second Canadian project in the history of The High Line Network in New York to be invited to join its prestigious learning network for reimagining infrastructure.

## Rouge National Urban Park

In partnership with Parks Canada, TRCA is focusing on restoring marginal agricultural lands within the headwaters of the new Rouge National Urban Park. In the 2020/2021 federal fiscal year, TRCA will have completed **500 m** of stream restoration, restored **4 ha** of wetland, **0.3 ha** of riparian area and achieved **0.04 ha** of farm Best Management Practices.

## Tommy Thompson Park

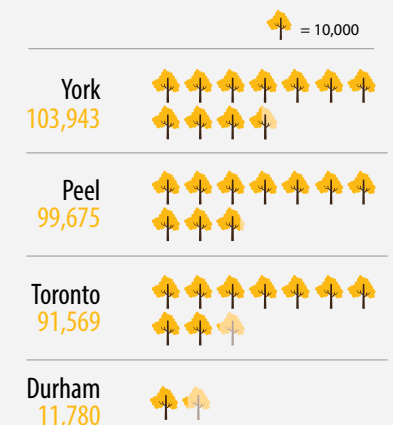
TRCA collected point location data for **32** terrestrial invasive species on approximately **110 ha** of land, a **92%** reduction in treatment area since the program began in 2013.

## Acquired Land

**131.92 ha** of land acquired, exceeding the 2020 target by **65%**.

## 304,421 units of plant material

Tree plantings undertaken by TRCA staff contribute to the overall forest canopy in the jurisdiction. Trees and shrubs sourced through TRCA's nursery in Vaughan and planted by TRCA staff are broken out by municipality below:



# 4 Create complete communities that integrate nature and the built environment



Complete communities support the well-being of each resident by providing a full range of housing, transportation, community infrastructure and open space opportunities. In order to create complete communities, TRCA needs to incorporate livability and sustainability into new developments, while supporting the transformation and retrofitting of existing neighbourhoods to reduce their environmental footprint and increase their resilience.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Assist landowners and government partners to realize complete communities and environmental best practices in new developments and existing neighborhoods.

Assess TRCA's development review process with member municipalities, industry and other stakeholders to identify opportunities to facilitate more timely reviews.

Provide value-added advice to protect natural heritage, reduce risk from flooding and erosion, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and restore habitats in the design of new communities and redeveloping areas.

Work with industry, private businesses and municipal partners to integrate natural heritage, elements of the Trail Strategy for The Greater Toronto Region, and green infrastructure into the design of new communities, and the redevelopment of older communities, at the earliest stage of the planning process in order to achieve vibrant award winning public spaces and multiple community benefits.

Engage with member municipalities, academic institutions, the development industry, and professional associations to deliver professional development programs, and conduct design charrettes and forums to achieve integrated sustainable community design in projects and plans.

■ Project/Program is started and on track
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 ● 2020 progress status

## Partnership Development

TRCA and its partners developed the *Trail Strategy: Trail and Amenity Projects Implementation Plan (2021-2025)* to outline a prioritized list of capital projects to jointly implement over the next five years.

## Building Community Resilience

TRCA and its partners completed a nationally published study demonstrating how the SNAP neighbourhood model for revitalizing green infrastructure at aging apartment towers effectively delivers on pressing housing issues and strengthen community resilience on a host of socio-economic objectives. For example, at the San Romanoway tower revitalization project, every **1** hour of SNAP programming generated **19** hours of community volunteerism; **70%** of residents reported feeling safer, **>85%** reported a positive impact on their mood, **61%** confirmed they have been inspired to start a small business due to the project and **69%** reported the project inspired them to fundraise for a community cause, all as a result of SNAP actions. This study was completed with funding awarded from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, under the National Housing Strategy program for the purposes of knowledge sharing across the multi-unit residential housing sector.

## Tree Planting Events

While many in person community-based restoration activities scheduled for spring and summer were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TRCA worked with our municipal partners to develop procedures to deliver **32** safe community-based restoration events after provincial restrictions eased in August.

## Regional Watershed Alliance

The Alliance reviewed and provided input on **9** different TRCA-led or partner supported initiatives. The Alliance was also kept informed through **3** different reports on TRCA policy responses, and **2** reports providing updates on TRCA's COVID-19 pandemic response. TRCA's Youth Council grew to **140** general members and the Youth Council Executive held **3** online events, including a Q&A on invasive species and a movie screening on road ecology and panel discussion afterwards with the film director and TRCA staff.

## Trail Strategy for the Greater Toronto Region

TRCA constructed **4.25 km** of trail including **1.75 km** of trails outlined in the Trail Strategy.

## Trail Accessibility

**7.1 km** of TRCA trails in addition to **72.6 km** of non-TRCA trails were assessed for accessibility using the High Efficiency Trail Assessment Process (HETAP).

## Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC)

The ESC Guide for Urban Construction, released in December 2019, received TRCA Board of Directors approval in April and was officially adopted for use in the review of development applications in September. To support the roll-out of the guide, **3** new online ESC workshops were developed and delivered in the fall.

## Low Impact Development (LID)

STEP developed a series of **10** LID fact sheets in support of the forthcoming LID Guide being developed for the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre in the City of Vaughan featuring the latest information on best practices for the planning and design of LID stormwater measures for intensifying communities.

## Aquatic and Terrestrial Resource Science

TRCA produced **7** scientific publications on topics ranging from climate change vulnerability of the natural heritage system and the importance of green infrastructure to community well-being.

## TRCA worked on 263 ecosystem and resource management projects and programs achieving:

**9.2 km**  
riparian restoration

**12.5 ha**  
shoreline restoration

**15.8 ha**  
wetland restoration

**36 ha**  
meadow restoration

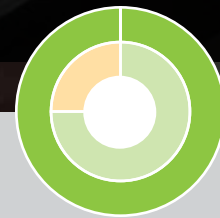
**3.7 km**  
stream restoration

**83.4 ha**  
forest/woodland restoration and management

# 5 Foster sustainable citizenship



To foster engagement of community members, TRCA needs to build civic capacity by providing the tools and opportunities needed for community members to transition from participants into advocates and leaders. TRCA can also facilitate a two-way dialogue with community members to ensure that local knowledge, ideas and concerns are integrated into decision-making by governments and agencies.



## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Provide increased engagement opportunities for stakeholders of all ages that build environmental, sustainability and climate awareness and promote leadership within communities including training and capacity building.

Work with Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation (TRCF) to secure funding, community awareness and involvement around TRCA and TRCF priority projects including The Meadoway, Tommy Thompson Park, Black Creek Pioneer Village, Bolton Camp redevelopment and the "Look After Where You Live" program.

Develop a greater diversity of nature-based programs to attract a wider range of community participants in TRCA programs.

Engage school boards and governments in discussions on how to achieve cost efficient and equitable access for students to curriculum out of class nature – science based education activities.

■ Project/Program is started and on track  
 ■ Project/Program has an issue identified  
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● 2019 progress status   ● 2020 progress status

### Education Programs

**33,470** participants in education programs at Kortright Centre for Conservation, Black Creek Pioneer Village, Tommy Thompson Park, TRCA's field centres and in-class at schools and through language learning centres.

### Outdoor Adult Education

**22,023** adults participated in a variety of environmentally themed courses, professional development opportunities, workshops, webinars and engaged with TRCA through educational social media posts and video content.

### Community Learning

**53** community learning partnerships were established, hosting a total of **245** event days engaging **45,489** participants.

### Professional Access Into Employment

**66** newcomer participants accessed the professional training program. **82%** gained employment in their field. **440%** salary increase post program.

### Visitor Satisfaction

**99%** of reviewers gave Black Creek Pioneer Village an approval rating of 4+ out of 5 on Google, TripAdvisor, and Facebook.

### Girls Can Too Program

A total of **37** participants were engaged in both virtual lunch and learn sessions as well as at **2** in-person events.

### Newcomer Youth Green Economy Project

**38** newcomer youth engaged in this career exploration program at **23** virtual events, training workshops, field trips, and indigenous learning opportunities.

### Ecosystem and Climate Science

**22** data sets have been provided to partner municipalities to support municipal planning for natural heritage and climate change resiliency planning.

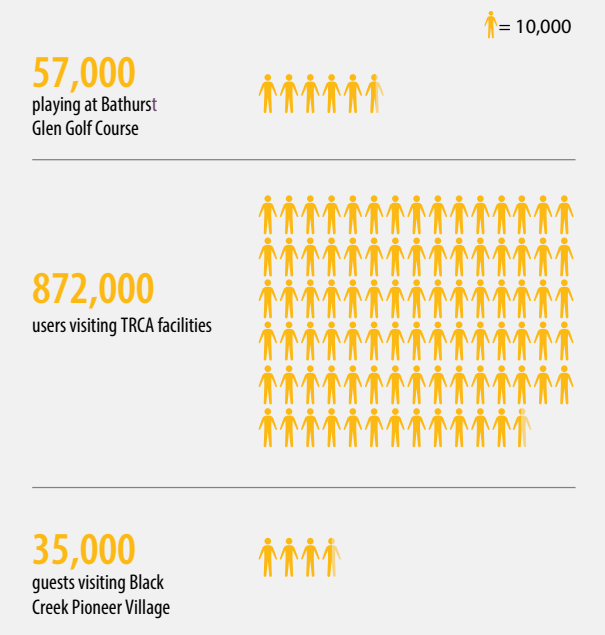
### Volunteer Hours

**432** hours of volunteer labour, combined with staff efforts in the Duffins Headwaters, contributed to trail and amenities building and maintenance along **165 kms** of trails, ensuring they are kept in a state of good repair and open for use.

## Greenspace Supports Mental Health and Well-being

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, people desired access to greenspace to support their physical and mental health and well-being more than ever before. While many other recreational facilities remained closed, TRCA's Conservation Parks, trails, golf course, campgrounds and Black Creek Pioneer Village opened as early as possible and stayed open to provide opportunities for the communities we serve to get outside and play, learn, exercise, and connect while engaging with nature.

From March to December, the province's framework for safe outdoor recreational activity changed regularly to reflect shifting public health direction. On each occasion, staff reacted quickly and effectively, demonstrating versatility and our commitment to ensuring that public access to greenspace continued. Facilities were permitted to safely re-open in 2020 with:





# 6 Tell the story of the Toronto region



Equipped with a strong sense of place, community members are more likely to be champions for their communities, for their local environment, and for conservation. TRCA will help to tell the story of the region's rich history through a range of voices and perspectives that fully represent the region's cultural diversity and rich heritage. By engaging communities in this conversation, TRCA will remember, teach and celebrate the experiences that form individual and shared identities.



## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Develop a clear and consistent identity and corporate brand for TRCA and build TRCA's visibility through formal and informal communication channels.

Update TRCA's Master Plans including our Archaeological Master Plan and Master Plans for specific Conservation Areas with new information obtained from relevant reviews and studies.

Integrate cultural heritage broadly throughout TRCA programming with a focus on fun, learning, and personal stories including those of indigenous community members.

Seek historic designations for TRCA's buildings, as well as new sources of funding for their restoration, re-use, and maintenance, where applicable.

Continue to engage the region's diverse communities to tell their stories and recognize their contributions, and develop community events that celebrate cultural heritage.

Focus on developing information that is accessible and engaging using a variety of mediums, including digital technology.

## Online Learning

A series of Indigenous-based webinars engaging Early Childhood Educators in building relationships with the land, learning circles and respectfully utilizing song, ceremony and water in teaching and learning was launched this year engaging **239** participants at **3** webinars, achieving **440** learner hours.

## Historic Asset Management

With funding from the City of Toronto, **\$400,000** was invested in the preservation of heritage buildings and infrastructure at Black Creek Pioneer Village.

## Artifacts

Archaeology staff reviewed the conditions of over **2,000** artifacts in their care and updated storage to conform to improved Collections Care Standards.

## Archaeology

Archaeology staff assessed **129** individual projects for archaeological potential, surveyed over **581 ha** of land, identified **6** previously unknown archaeological sites, and collected **261** artifacts in their efforts to protect and preserve heritage resources on TRCA lands.

*"The challenges of physical distancing have brought an increasing need to connect with nature. To our amazement we have noticed an unprecedented interest in everything heritage, especially environmental and cultural."*

– **Humber Heritage Committee**

## Asset Management

Currently, TRCA is in the process of completing **5** Building Condition Assessments (BCA) within the Albion Hills Conservation Area, Heart Lake Conservation Area, Indian Line Campground, Kortright Centre of Conservation, and Lake St. George properties. BCAs have also been commenced at **27** rental properties.

## Interactive History Exhibit

The first interactive history exhibit designed to tell the story of the Toronto region at Black Creek Pioneer Village has earned early praise by educators within the museum field for its innovative approach to teaching and design. The exhibit's official opening has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Oral History Research

TRCA continued its work as a part of a unique three-way partnership with York University and Indigenous artists to complete original archival and community-based oral history research on Indigenous peoples living in the Toronto region in the 19th century and to install a permanent exhibit at Black Creek Pioneer Village. York University was successful in its application for project funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and hosted an introductory meeting with representatives from five First Nations and TRCA.

## Indigenous Engagement

Archeology staff led **19** formal consultations with First Nations and Métis communities across the jurisdiction.



## Black Creek Pioneer Village

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Creek Pioneer Village (BCPV) had to pivot from in-person learning to offering virtual educational programming. Staff developed **7** online exhibits, **10** "at home" activities for families, **11** educational resources for teachers, and numerous educational videos.

Reception of these offerings was extremely positive and over the course of 2020, these online resources were visited **45,000** times.

In the fall, BCPV launched its first virtual programs: interactive curriculum-linked programs for students. Uptake was immediate and remained steady through the fall and winter. More than **500** students had their in-person learning enhanced through virtual "field trips" within the first weeks of operations.

BCPV produced **9** virtual workshops for families, adults, and students over the holidays.

Lessons learned in 2020 have positioned BCPV well to expand its virtual audience and share the story of the Greater Toronto Region more broadly in 2021 and beyond.

# 7 Build partnerships and new business models



Securing stable funding and resources to carry out TRCA's mandate remains an ongoing priority for the organization. New opportunities for funding and collaborative arrangements are emerging, but at the same time, competition for funding and resources is increasing. The economic landscape that supports TRCA and its work is shifting, and TRCA must continually assess and respond to changes affecting funding and resources.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)



- Continue to diversify TRCA's financial capacity by leveraging government funding to attract private sector funding through TRCF.
- Develop a clear and consistent identity and leadership voice for TRCA and build TRCA's visibility through the Corporate Branding Strategy, media exposure, events, conferences and partnerships.
- Raise the profile of TRCF, by working together to advance priority initiatives.
- Establish service rates consistent with other service providers as part of the plan for growing TRCA's fee-for-service work.
- Advance new business models to maintain assets and ensure efficient program delivery.

■ Project/Program is started and on track  
 ■ Project/Program has an issue identified  
 ■ Project/Program has not yet commenced  
● 2019 progress status   ● 2020 progress status

## Maintained Rental Revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic

TRCA was able to work with our tenants to maintain required rental revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Monarch Nation

Flight of the Monarchs Day, held on August 22, 2020, was initiated to provide a vital opportunity to increase community awareness related to species at risk and engage new communities in the work of habitat restoration and enhancement, as well as raise the visibility of the Monarch Nation program and extend its reach into new areas across Canada. **18,500** people from across the country participated in the event this year.

## Social Media

TRCA has **20** active social media accounts and a direct audience of over **67,000** people, an increase of **12,000** over the previous year. TRCA gained **20,000** newsletter subscribers this year, an **18%** increase over the previous year, achieving over **50,000** engagements.

## Albion Hills Master Plan

**1.3 ha** of event space was created at the Riverview site and **300 m** of new multi-use trail was added to the existing trail network which will facilitate new partnership opportunities.

## Greening Local Businesses

Partners in Project Green (an eco-business collaboration with Toronto Pearson Airport) welcomed **21** new member businesses in 2020.

## Flood Forecasting and Warning Workshop

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 workshop moved to a digital format and featured **5** streams showcasing **26** presenters, **5** facilitators and over **10** hours of presentations engaging **580** participants highlighting topics on flood forecasting and warning, emergency management, flow measurement and data collection.

## Establishing Partnerships

TRCA finalized **93** new revenue agreements to help support mutually benefiting partner priorities across TRCA's jurisdiction, including the Rockcliffe Riverine Flood Mitigation Municipal Class Environmental Assessment.

## COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Programs

TRCA applied to **4** funding programs and continues to pursue opportunities to mitigate revenue loss.


## Parks and Greenspace Partnerships


**Filming**  
TRCA strengthened its relationship with the film industry by responding to their urgent need to resurrect their industry and make up for months of lost production time. TRCA's ability to react quickly on short notice and provide safe, quality locations for their productions resulted in much needed revenue and enhanced relationships with film companies that will benefit TRCA in years to come. This year saw **33** filming agreements through **21** productions totaling a combined **340** days of filming at TRCA's conservation properties.


**Canadian Tire Christmas Trail at Black Creek Pioneer Village**  
TRCA licensed park land to the Canadian Tire Christmas Trail event organizers, introducing TRCA's lands to a broader audience while earning revenue that supports educational and recreational use of its public sites. By providing a safe drive-thru event, the Canadian Tire Christmas Trail brought **20,000** people to Black Creek Pioneer Village over **48** days in 2020 and earned **\$185,000** in support of the site's heritage operations.

## Building Sustainable Business Models

Throughout the 2020 fiscal year, TRCA's Funding and Grants program facilitated a total of **56** submissions, with a total request value of over **\$13.9M**.

 **\$8.2M** grant applications under review

 **\$3.2M** awarded through grant approval

 **\$2.5M** grant submissions declined

TRCA continues to partner with municipalities to leverage our expertise in submitting joint grant applications and implementing shared priority projects.

# 8 Gather and share the best sustainability knowledge



TRCA is part of a network of thought leaders striving to address a range of urban sustainability issues, including watershed management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and ecosystem conservation. TRCA is recognized for its expertise by researchers, practitioners and community members, and is well positioned to help generate and mobilize the knowledge needed to answer urgent environmental challenges.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Increase collaboration with senior levels of government, academic institutions, private sector and not-for-profit stakeholders to develop leading-edge sustainability knowledge.

Continue to demonstrate leading-edge community energy efficiency and sustainable design practices in TRCA facilities, including at the Living City Campus at Kortright.

Bring together agencies, professional organizations, and academic institutions working on protection and restoration in the jurisdiction to maximize efficiencies and to ensure the best science and data is leveraged in the delivery of programs and projects.

Deliver knowledge sharing events to professionals in the fields of environmental engineering, restoration ecology and climate change resilience.

Undertake pilot collaborations with industry, academic institutions and partners to determine and demonstrate which TRCA data are most useful in supporting sustainable practices, and how best to provide access to that data to achieve more sustainable development.

- Project/Program is started and on track
- Project/Program has an issue identified
- Project/Program has not yet commenced
- 2019 progress status
- 2020 progress status

## STEP Online Workshops

Working in partnership with industry experts, STEP developed a library of **12** online workshops engaging **567** participants, constituting **1,959** learner hours, with topics ranging from erosion and sediment control to stormwater management and low impact development.

## Ontario Climate Consortium Collaboration

**8** research projects completed and knowledge shared at **25** forums including webinars, municipal stakeholder events, conferences and working groups.

## Carruthers Creek Watershed Plan

**17** submissions received on final draft through the online comment form; **182** submissions sent to Durham Region from the public regarding protecting the headwaters of Carruthers Creek.

## Pickering Ajax Dyke Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment (EA)

TRCA hosted its first ever virtual Public Information Centre (PIC), achieving public consultation objectives of the Class EA process in compliance with the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The PIC was hosted live online and attended by residents and stakeholders. This EA included rehabilitation options for **2** existing flood control dykes referred to as the Pickering and Ajax dykes, respectively.

## Erosion Monitoring

Staff continued advancing the use of RPAS (Drone) equipment and captured information across **28.6 km** of Lake Ontario shoreline while inspecting the conditions of TRCA's shoreline erosion control structures.

## Regional Watershed Monitoring Program

In spite of some reductions in environmental monitoring activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TRCA collected more than **16 M** data records this year including more than **103,000** biodiversity records. **247** new monitoring sites were sampled in 2020 to support new projects and fill data gaps for Watershed Planning activities. Data and information was presented in **41** documents including reports and technical memos to share this knowledge.

## Aquatic and Terrestrial Ecosystem Science

Collaborated on **8** projects to integrate climate science knowledge into municipal management plans, habitat restoration planning, and natural heritage system and watershed plans.

## Watershed Planning and Ecosystem Science

Integrated Watershed Planning and Reporting is critical in providing a scientifically sound approach to managing watersheds, and it is now required by provincial policy to inform municipal land use and infrastructure planning. Reporting on the state of watersheds and understanding how conditions may change under different future land use and climate scenarios are critical to keeping our watersheds healthy. Despite its challenges, 2020 was a very productive year for advancing TRCA's watershed planning and reporting products, including:

- Public release of the Draft Carruthers Creek Watershed Plan that will help inform growth planning in Durham Region and creates a framework for watershed management across Ontario;
- Completion and Board of Directors approval of the Highland Creek Watershed Greening Strategy that will help to guide TRCA and City of Toronto greening projects in the watershed;
- Initiation of the Etobicoke Creek Watershed Plan, which will align with and complement the growth planning exercises currently underway in Peel Region and the City of Toronto;



- Collection of additional data to fill gaps and support Etobicoke Creek and Humber River watershed planning; and
- Completion of the draft Watersheds and Ecosystems Reporting Web Application, which will interactively communicate the state of watershed and ecosystem conditions to partners and stakeholders.

# 9 Measure performance



Measuring Performance at TRCA and in the jurisdiction helps the organization understand what it is doing well and what still needs to be done in order to achieve its goals. TRCA must use what it learns from progress measurement to adjust its policies and priorities, achieve its mandate, improve programs and projects, and reallocate resources to where they will deliver the greatest impact for its stakeholders.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

- Invest in digital technologies which will allow the organization to better measure and communicate TRCA's value proposition.
- Produce updated Watershed and Living City Report Cards on a regular basis and support community-led reporting to ensure stakeholders and community members understand the environmental health of TRCA watersheds.
- Improve and enhance the Centralized Planning and Reporting (CPR) database by developing consistent reporting measures including key performance indicators and targets to measure progress towards strategic outcomes and to report on the impact of TRCA work.
- Work with industry, government, academic institutions and partners to highlight successful and innovative projects in journals and publications.

Project/Program is started and on track
 Project/Program has an issue identified
 Project/Program has not yet commenced

2019 progress status
 2020 progress status

## 27

properties inventoried and assessed for trail hazards

### Peel Climate Change Performance Indicators

TRCA engaged over **50** subject matter experts from the Region of Peel and Credit Valley Conservation on the Peel Climate Change Key Performance Indicator project. This project will develop performance measures to track, monitor, and report on the impacts and effectiveness of projects that receive Region of Peel climate change funding. **8** logic models have been developed and **17** KPIs are drafted for current and future use.

### Enforcement and Compliance

Conducted **3,866** permit inspections and issued **169** violations on **132** properties. Received **503** complaints, resolved **66** violations and conducted **900** inspections relating to violations and complaints.

### Online Planning and Development

**137,811** visits to the Planning and Development webpage, a **15%** increase over the previous year.

### Watershed Reporting

Completed a draft of the Watersheds and Ecosystems Reporting Web Application to communicate watershed conditions with partners and stakeholders. Anticipated launch is scheduled for Earth Day, April 22, 2021.

### Annual Audit

TRCA 2019 audited financial statements were issued with a clean auditor's report.

### Environmental Assessments (EAs)

TRCA reviewed **49** EAs in 2020, a **20%** decrease over 2019 and issued **420** permits for projects approved through the EA process, resulting in no change over 2019.

### Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT)

TRCA was involved in **55** LPAT cases. **29** appeals were settled by the end of the year, reducing the caseload from **55** to **26**.

### Planning and Permit Applications

**1,008** permits were issued of the **1,230** permit applications submitted to TRCA in 2020. TRCA reviewed and commented on **891** planning and concept applications.

As of September, over **83%** of permits were processed and issued within Conservation Ontario's new service delivery guidelines, and **98%** under their former guidelines. In order to retain service delivery, Infrastructure Planning and Permits and Development Planning and Permits transitioned to **100%** digital permit application, review and issuance by July 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Municipal Collaboration

TRCA, in support of its partners, participated in over **50** consultation sessions regarding the Municipal Comprehensive Review Official Plan amendment process.

### Regulated Area Mapping

**31%** of all Planning and Development webpage views engaged the Regulated Area Search tool to determine if a property is located within TRCA's Regulated Area. This tool allowed users to utilize new, more accurate, regulatory area screening mapping, which was developed with extensive stakeholder input.

### Freedom of Information

TRCA staff completed **40** Freedom of Information Requests, of which **92.5%** of requests were completed within the legislated timelines. Those that were delayed were due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

### Flood Plain Data

**94%** of flood plain data (**1,234 km**) currently meets the service delivery standard of ensuring that data is no more than 10 years old, which is an improvement over the **62%** achieved in 2019.

### Environmental Assessment and Permit Service Standards

The service level standards (2 - 6 weeks) for EA and permit reviews, were met **86%** of the time, encompassing over **77,359** hours of planning and technical staff time.

# 10 Accelerate innovation



Photo rendering provided by ZAS Architects and Bucholz McEvoy Architects.

To address the urgent and complex growth and sustainability challenges of the region, TRCA must accelerate the pace of innovation. TRCA must purposefully create the conditions for innovation and continuous improvement and share these innovations with its member municipalities throughout the region to advance shared objectives in sustainability.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Open TRCA's head office by 2022, which will demonstrate innovative green building practices.

Expand TRCA's fee-for-service consulting work to help address member municipality and partner objectives in a financially sustainable way.

Continue to host knowledge sharing events such as the TRCA and International Erosion Control Association (TRIECA) Conference.

Develop user-friendly planning tools that identify how flood risks can be reduced and how ecosystems can be protected and restored, recognizing urban growth and climate change.

Work closely with member municipalities, academic institutions and private industry to monitor, evaluate, and pilot new innovative technologies in TRCA's work.

Seek input from TRCA staff and support their efforts to develop innovations that improve program delivery.

Conduct a staff survey on a regular basis to highlight progress on staff related initiatives and to determine opportunities for continuous improvement.

- Project/Program is started and on track
- Project/Program has an issue identified
- Project/Program has not yet commenced
- 2019 progress status
- 2020 progress status

## Administrative Office Building

TRCA participated in the BBC StoryWorks Series, Building a Better Future, a series exploring the profound effect buildings have on the quality of people's lives and the role the green buildings movement can play in tackling the climate emergency.

TRCA's administration building project continues to meet the highest standards in sustainability and design:

- LEED Platinum
- WELL Silver
- Zero Carbon Certification
- Toronto Green Standards Tier 2

## TRCA and International Erosion Control Association (TRIECA) Conference

The 2020 edition was successfully transitioned online to a series of **31** webinars offered from April to December, with **3,750** participants attending and **2,900** learner hours delivered.

## Greening our Buildings

Sustainable Technologies Evaluation Program, in partnership with the Partners in Project Green, Kortright, Corporate Sustainability and Community Transformation teams, were successful recipients of a Natural Resources Canada grant to support the recommissioning of the Kortright Visitor Centre. Recommissioning will result in enhancement of the building's energy efficiency through low or no cost measures, improved equipment longevity and greater occupant comfort.

## Modernization

Migrated **15** servers to Microsoft Azure to support corporate sustainability and new Head Office preparations. Replaced legacy phone systems at **2** offices to assist with modernization.

**5,000** daily work reports entered digitally instead of on paper.

**1,500** unique users visiting new [trcagauging.ca](http://trcagauging.ca) website, totaling **24,000** page views.

## Flood Plain Mapping Update

Leveraging funding from the 4th and 5th intakes of the National Disaster Mitigation Program, a myriad of key flood mitigation and mapping projects were completed in 2020, supporting TRCA's mandate in the critical area of flood risk management.

## Erosion Management Diversified Funding

TRCA secured enhanced funding from the Region of York to undertake more minor and proactive works given the program has remediated all the critical priority sites currently known.

## Material Diversion

TRCA's Project Management Office worked in partnership with the Corporate Sustainability program to achieve an overall diversion rate of **85%** on **3** construction and demolition pilot projects.

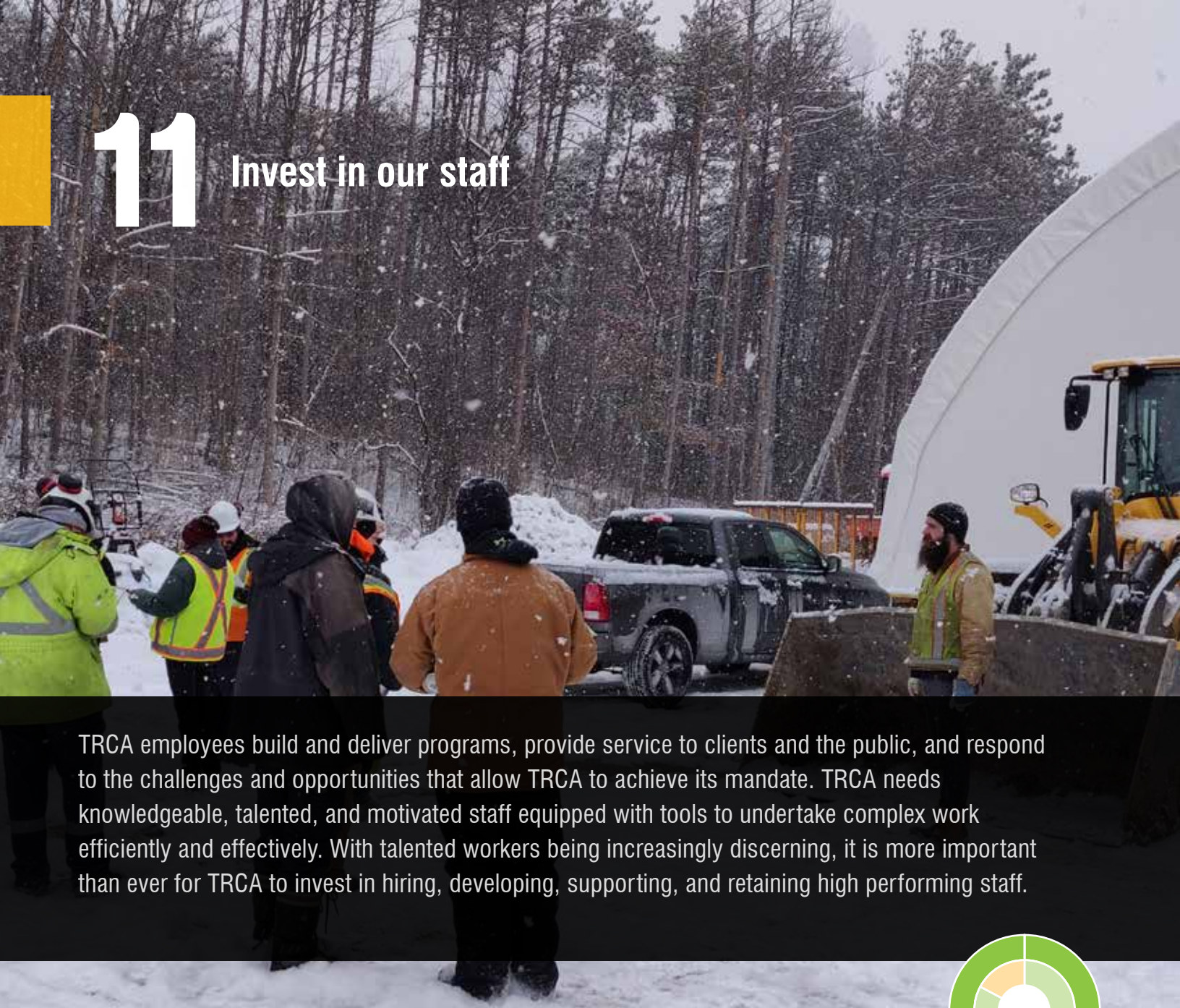
In 2020, the Education and Training team responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by transitioning **713** events into virtual learning and programming models. These virtual events, programs and resources reached **122,604** individuals. In order to meet the needs of its diverse community, a variety of virtual tools and engagement strategies were implemented.

In the spring of 2020, Provincial regulations and public health guidelines allowed for the development of safety protocols including use of masks, social distancing, reduced group sizes, contact tracing and screening of staff and participants to allow for safe in-person events. During this time, the Education Team engaged with **27,462** residents to offer **459** safe in-person events and programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, TRCA was well positioned to offer all of these programs entirely outdoors either on TRCA property or on properties of municipal partners. In-person programming allowed TRCA to continue to work with the community on impactful initiatives such as providing **16,665** meals to individuals in vulnerable communities, tree and shrub plantings and safe outdoor schooling and family events. The Education and Training team has also advanced innovative strategies to keep residents engaged including drive-through plant pick up engagement events and balcony gardening kit distribution.

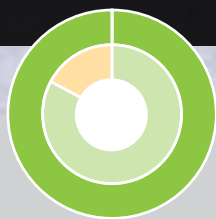


# 11 Invest in our staff



TRCA employees build and deliver programs, provide service to clients and the public, and respond to the challenges and opportunities that allow TRCA to achieve its mandate. TRCA needs knowledgeable, talented, and motivated staff equipped with tools to undertake complex work efficiently and effectively. With talented workers being increasingly discerning, it is more important than ever for TRCA to invest in hiring, developing, supporting, and retaining high performing staff.

## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)



Prepare new policies, procedures, standards and guidelines for how TRCA employees interact with the organization and customers.

Strengthen HR and Corporate Services teams to ensure necessary training for staff and to better support employee performance and wellness.

Introduce streamlined methods for communicating the organization's key successes and areas for improvement, both internally and for stakeholders.

Encourage interdisciplinary and interdepartmental teams on projects and plans.

Implement a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to streamline human resources and payroll services.

Create a TRCA Succession Plan that identifies future leaders and ensures business continuity.

■ Project/Program is started and on track ■ Project/Program has an issue identified ■ Project/Program has not yet commenced

● 2019 progress status ● 2020 progress status

## Employee Engagement

Developed and implemented TRCA's Employee Engagement Roadmap which built on employee suggestions on how to improve our work environment that were received through the Employee Engagement Survey. The employee response rate to the initial survey was **84%**, a **33%** increase from the last survey.

## Health & Safety

TRCA's Human Resources team created, updated and received approval for **31** foundation and core human resources and health and safety policies. A number of these policies also included the development of enabling programs.

## Corporate Policy Updates

**74** new and updated policies and guidelines were approved and went into effect with others being advanced by the interdepartmental Policy Committee.

## Years of Service Awards

TRCA held its second annual Staff Service Recognition Awards with a virtual ceremony in September. Chair Innis along with members of the Senior Leadership Team provided remarks and recognized **82** staff for reaching these important years of service milestones.

## Succession Planning

TRCA's Human Resources took an integrated, evidence based, and inclusive approach to the development of a value-driven succession development program which was approved by the Board of Directors this year. The program has an established continuous review cycle designed to monitor, evaluate and calibrate the program to ensure the program is meeting TRCA's organizational needs.



The COVID-19 pandemic has had major impacts on TRCA staff, stakeholders, vendors, customers, volunteers and user groups. TRCA launched a COVID-19 Recovery Playbook which has laid the foundation for TRCA's staged recovery and allowed the organization to take an agile approach to the ever-changing legislative and public health guidelines and recommendations. The Playbook provides a mechanism that allows for TRCA to adapt to the fluid changes of the COVID-19 pandemic while ensuring the health and safety of all of the organization's employees. This in turn has ensured business continuity for all of our partners, customers, and external stakeholders. To adapt to the pandemic TRCA:

- Developed and executed Pandemic Incident Management System (IMS) Field Procedure protocol for all field staff to follow while the IMS for the COVID-19 pandemic is active to protect worker health and safety while delivering essential services on behalf of our municipal partners; and
- Pivoted to a remote working environment.

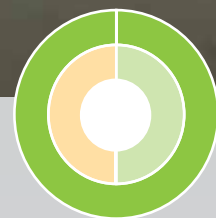
These actions have enabled TRCA to maintain its commitment to long-term data collection in support of watershed planning and reporting, and to support the uninterrupted planning, permitting and implementation of many capital infrastructure projects for TRCA and our partners. In this respect, TRCA has been one of the few agencies in the Greater Toronto Area (including Provincial and Federal) that have been able to maintain environmental monitoring activities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, Flood Infrastructure and Hydrometrics was able to maintain **100%** business activities in order to ensure TRCA's continued flood protection and warning services.

- Implemented and is continually refining the COVID-19 pandemic policies and procedures in addition to a Pandemic Flu and Infectious Illness Policy, the COVID-19 Recovery Playbook and Business Continuity Plans;
- Launched a staff redeployment program to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff;

# 12 Facilitate a region-wide approach to sustainability



Around the world, urban regions are becoming connected across their constituent municipal boundaries to tackle pressing sustainability challenges, including greenhouse emissions reduction, climate resilience, transit and transportation, food security, waste management and watershed conservation. TRCA plays an important coordination role on matters that cross municipal boundaries. To achieve shared goals of a green, sustainable, prosperous region, TRCA must build on its history of bringing stakeholders together from across watersheds in the jurisdiction to ensure regional-scale cross boundary collaboration on today's challenges.



## PROJECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2018 – 2022)

Develop Master Service Agreements and Fee-For-Service Arrangements with member municipalities to help achieve their sustainability objectives.

Ensure that updated TRCA plans and strategies are leveraged in amendments to municipal official plans and in provincial and regional infrastructure initiatives.

Publish the Living City Report Card and Watershed Report Cards to provide clear indicators of environmental health within the jurisdiction.

Expand the Partners and Project Green Eco-Zone program to include emerging employment areas in the jurisdiction subject to partner funding.

■ Project/Program is started and on track
 ■ Project/Program has an issue identified
 ■ Project/Program has not yet commenced

● 2019 progress status
 ● 2020 progress status

## Flood Protection Funding

On October 30, 2020, the Government of Canada announced a commitment of **\$19 M** alongside the City of Toronto which is also contributing **\$28.5 M** to the Jane Street Crossing Project. This project is a critical component of a multi-year flood mitigation strategy for Toronto's Rockcliffe-Smythe neighbourhood.

Additionally, TRCA completed the Environmental Assessment and assisted the City of Brampton in their successful application to the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund for the Downtown Brampton Flood Protection Project which secured up to **\$38.8 M** in federal funding.

## Partners in Project Green

Green Economy Webinar Series and People Power Challenge hosted **12** events with **1,638** participants achieving **1,638** learner hours. Energy Leaders Consortium and Small and Medium Enterprise Consortium hosted **24** events with **460** participants achieving **460** learner hours.

## Climate Dataset

New future climate projections have been established using a scientifically robust approach developed by the Ontario Climate Consortium. Projections initially developed for the Region of Durham are now being expanded for use in the Watersheds and Ecosystems Reporting Web Application and future watershed planning, including the Etobicoke Creek Watershed Plan currently underway.

## Water Resource System

TRCA staff continue to collaborate with our municipal partners and other conservation authorities to develop and refine Water Resource System mapping data layers such as wetlands and streams and other groundwater and surface water features and areas to support Municipal Comprehensive Reviews.

## Technical Advice

Through **88** consultations, TRCA staff provided technical advice on Municipal Comprehensive Reviews.

## Conservation Authorities Act Amendments

With the release of proposed changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and *Planning Act* under *Bill 229*, Policy Planning staff worked to research these proposals, summarize their implications, and draft recommendations for the CEO and Chair's office for reporting to the Board of Directors and for submission and presentation to the government through the Ontario Legislative process.

## Emergency Hazard Sites

**34** emergency hazard sites were reported to TRCA's partner municipalities to inform budgetary and future workplans.

## Official Plans

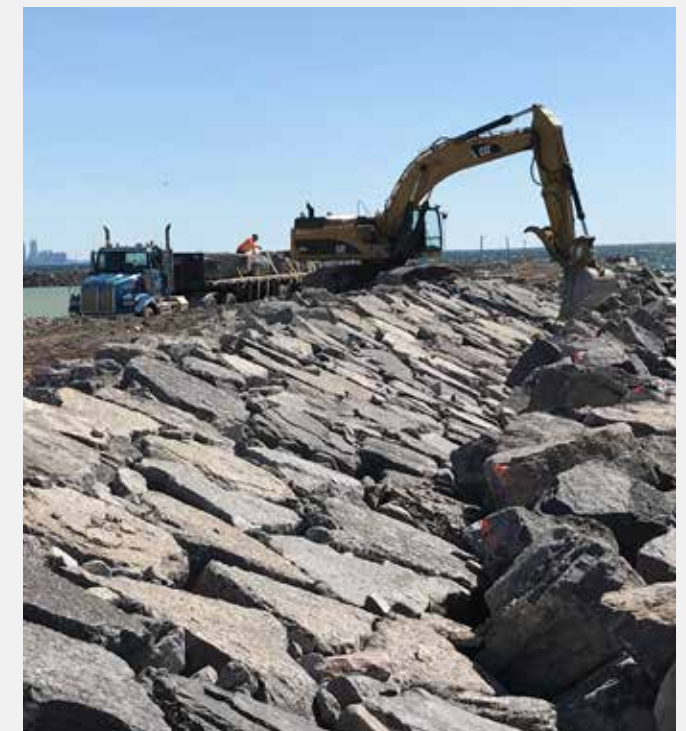
2020 was another busy year supporting our partner municipalities through **9** Official Plan reviews, a **29%** increase over last year.

## The Lakeview Waterfront Connection

(Jim Tovey Lakeview Conservation Area)

Through a long-term partnership with Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), the Region of Peel (RoP) and the City of Mississauga, TRCA is supporting its partners in their aim to restore and re-create natural coastal habitats, encourage public use of the waterfront, and facilitate sustainable city building through this important project. Together this year we:

- Completed construction of **200** linear metres of Applewood channel including connection to the existing Applewood Creek;
- Completed construction of Applewood wetland creating an additional **1.5 ha** of habitat compensation;
- Completed topsoil and seeding of Cells 3a & 4a including planting of **9,631** trees and shrubs by CVC crews;
- Imported and placed a total of **823** truckloads of concrete and brick/block rubble or approximately **6,584 m<sup>3</sup>** for maintenance of the existing access road, interim shoreline protection and filling of the south offshore island;
- Imported and placed of **44,055 m<sup>3</sup>** and **224,650 m<sup>3</sup>** of fill material from private sources and RoP projects, respectively; and
- Haulage and placement of rubble core for the south offshore island in preparation for final armouring in 2021.





## Challenges

### FINANCIAL

Since March 2020, TRCA has worked diligently to respond to Provincial announcements and direction related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 provincially declared emergency resulted in closures of TRCA facilities as well as the cancellation of TRCA events and regularly scheduled programming in the first half of the year. Continued restrictions have dramatically impacted TRCA's business models and associated revenues. Across TRCA's vast service offerings, adjustments have been made to conventional operations – everything from sanitary protocols, health and safety protocols, social distancing protocols and fee adjustments – to allow for the gradual re-opening in accordance with the Recovery Playbook and government direction. TRCA expects to continue to follow provincial and municipal guidelines for public health and safe re-opening procedures into 2021.

Additionally, the release of the *Conservation Authorities Act (CA Act)* and *Planning Act* amendments in November 2020 have necessitated a shift in TRCA's funding models. TRCA will continue to work with the Province to influence the proposed pending regulations and with partner municipalities throughout 2021 to implement the required changes for the 2022 fiscal year. As part of this effort, Memorandums of Understanding, Service Level Agreements and Fee-for-Service Agreements with member municipalities will be updated and developed to help achieve shared sustainability objectives. Subject to partner support, TRCA will continue to invest in aging infrastructure across TRCA's Conservation

Areas and public spaces in order to provide safe, accessible, and functional facilities to the public. Additionally, the funding and grants program will continue to seek out new revenue streams that will alleviate reliance on TRCA's levy and partner municipality capital budgets so that funds can be directed to the areas of greatest need.

### PROVINCIAL POLICY

TRCA has been a value-added collaborator throughout the three-year Provincial consultation process regarding the modernization of the CA Act. As a technical advisor to the Province, TRCA staff worked diligently throughout November 2020 following release of the proposed changes to the CA Act to articulate our substantial concerns about the impacts that amendments in Schedule 6 will have regarding conservation authorities' roles in permitting, planning and enforcement. We were successful in making some changes to allow us to fulfill our core mandate of watershed protection.

In 2021, the Province is consulting on regulations to enact recent amendments to the CA Act. TRCA is engaged in this process, providing input through representation on the CA Act Working Group and reporting to the Board of Directors and municipal partners. This work includes an update to our permitting regulation and our planning and development processes as the new regulations are enacted; until such time current processes remain in effect.

### PEOPLE AND PROPERTY

Reducing the risk and potential for costly flooding, pollution, and erosion damage remains a primary TRCA objective. TRCA will continue to support efforts by partners and senior levels of government to respond to increasing risks by helping to build infrastructure that is more resilient to flood and erosion hazards, providing expertise in predicting the effects on watersheds and communities, and connecting stakeholders with the knowledge and technologies that they require. TRCA's inventory of flood infrastructure is aging, and in some cases, has exceeded its expected functional life. TRCA is monitoring these structures and performing capital improvements as they become necessary. TRCA has made significant progress in upgrading the condition of its flood infrastructure over the past 15 years, however, some mitigation projects are very large in scope and will require substantial funding. Through engagement with local communities, TRCA will increase awareness of the issues facing water resources and the health and well-being of the jurisdiction. Looking forward, TRCA aims to achieve the most appropriate use of TRCA's inventory of lands and facilities while respecting cultural heritage and environmental values, in addition to fostering sustainable citizenship through the celebration of our diverse communities and shared collective history. Priority greenspace and community initiatives of Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation, our member municipalities, and partners, such as The Meadoway, Tommy Thompson Park, Bolton Camp, and Black Creek Pioneer Village remains a focus. In 2021, TRCA will work to update Master Plans for specific Conservation Areas with new information obtained from relevant reviews and studies recognizing municipal

or community efforts to seek historic designations for TRCA's buildings, as well as new sources of funding for their restoration, re-use and maintenance, where applicable.

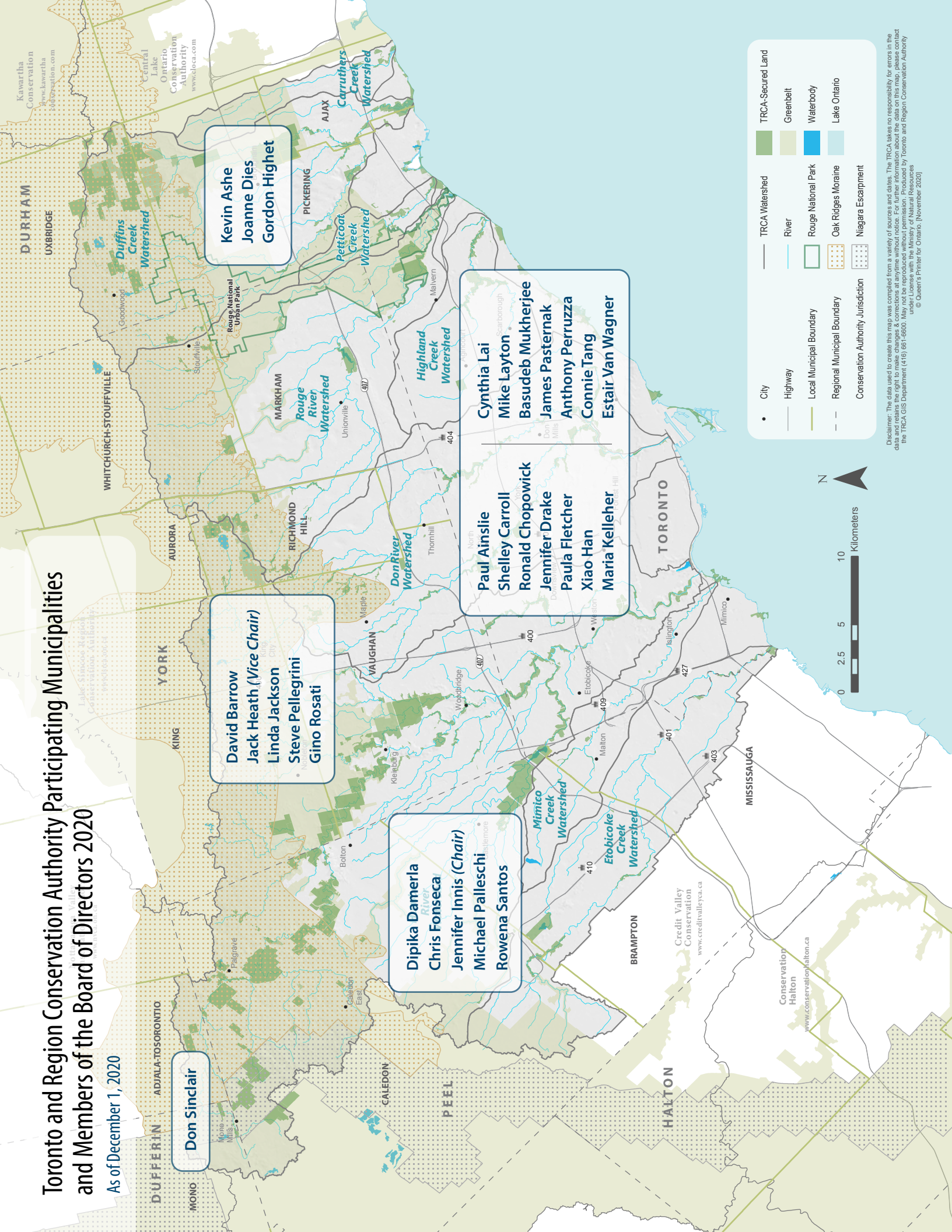
### COLLECTIVE IMPACT

With environmental and public health challenges, there is increasing recognition of the need for regional-scale coordination to protect and manage our natural resources. Greater responsibility is also being placed on government agencies to consult and engage more effectively. Measuring our impact with a series of key performance indicators relevant to our work will give the ability to align TRCA initiatives to our partner municipalities priorities. Regular measurement will provide funding justifications and greater rationale for our work across the jurisdiction. Our future focus is on developing partnerships that will support shared priorities, evaluate, and pilot new innovative technologies. Investment in digital technologies will enhance the measurement and communication of TRCA's value proposition. TRCA will continue to demonstrate leading-edge community energy efficiency and sustainable design practices in TRCA facilities and seize opportunities for integrating more sustainable technologies and sustainable development certifications in our design and construction reviews and work. Using our strength as a convener, and a delivery agent for infrastructure, restoration and monitoring work in sensitive environments, TRCA will increase coordination and the efficient delivery of services across its growing network of organizations, academic institutions, and governments throughout the jurisdiction.



# Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Participating Municipalities and Members of the Board of Directors 2020

As of December 1, 2020



# Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Senior Leadership Team 2020



## OUR VISION

The quality of life on Earth is being determined in rapidly expanding city regions. Our vision is for a new kind of community — The Living City — where human settlement can flourish forever as part of nature’s beauty and diversity.

## OUR MISSION

To protect, conserve and restore natural resources and develop resilient communities through education, the application of science, community engagement, service excellence and collaboration with our partners.

## OUR CORE VALUES

- INTEGRITY**  
We are honest, ethical, and professional.
- COLLABORATION**  
We achieve shared goals through a solution-oriented approach.
- ACCOUNTABILITY**  
We are responsible for our actions, behaviours and results.
- RESPECT**  
We are equitable, fair and respectful while recognizing individual contributions and diversity.
- EXCELLENCE**  
We maintain a high standard of performance and customer service, consistently striving to improve and produce quality work.