



August LRCA Board Meeting

Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
130 Conservation Road/Microsoft Teams
2025-08-27 16:30 - 18:00 EDT

Table of Contents

1. CALL TO ORDER

Declaration: "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."

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

THAT: the Agenda be adopted as published.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.....4

THAT: the Minutes of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority Sixth Regular Meeting held on June 26, 2025 be adopted as published.

06-26-25 Minutes.pdf.....4

5. IN-CAMERA AGENDA

THAT: we now go into Committee of the Whole (In-Camera) at _____ p.m.

THAT: we go into Open Meeting at _____ p.m.

THAT: the In-Camera Minutes of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority May 28, 2025 meeting be adopted as published.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1. Memo from MECP regarding transition of Conservation Authority Program from MNR to MECP.....9

Transfer of CA to MECP_stakeholder memo_27Jun2025.pdf.....9

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1. Floodway Diversion Channel - Design of Channel Improvements in Diversion Channel.....10

THAT: the Contract for Detailed Design of Channel Improvements on the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway by KGS Group for a cost of \$67,500.00 not including HST be approved.

NMFC-06-2025 Floodway Diversion Channel.pdf.....10

8.2. Traffic Counter Report - 2024.....13

THAT: the Staff Report CONAREA-03-2025 be received.

CONAREA-03 2025 2024 Traffic Counter Report.pdf.....13

8.3. Neebing McIntyre Floodway - Lyon's Drainage Outlet Improvements (Culverts to Bridge).....23

THAT: the City of Thunder Bay is authorized to remove the existing Lyon's drainage channel outlet culverts along the north bank of the Neebing McIntyre Floodway and install a new clear-span bridge at the same location, with the requirement that the City of Thunder Bay is responsible for all future maintenance of the infrastructure.

NMFC-05-2025, CTB Culvert to Bridge - Lyon's Drainage Channel outlet to NM Floodway.pdf.....23

9. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

9.1. Monthly Treasurer's Report.....28

Monthly Financial Report June.pdf.....28

Monthly Financial Report July.pdf.....29

9.2. 2026 Draft Budget.....30

THAT: the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority approves the 2026 Draft Budget, Version 1.0, dated August 27, 2025, for consultation purposes.

FIN-09-2025 Draft 2026 Budget.pdf.....30

10. PASSING OF ACCOUNTS.....114

THAT: having examined the accounts for the period June 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 cheque #3581 to #3607 for \$60,298.67 and preauthorized payments of \$160,385.64 for a total of \$220,684.31, we approve their payment

THAT: having examined the accounts for the period July 1, 2025 to July 31, 2025 cheque #3608 to #3636 for \$58,956.43 and preauthorized payments of \$156,534.25 for a total of \$215,490.68, we approve their payment.

Passing of Accounts June.pdf.....114

Passing of Accounts July.pdf.....115

11. REGULATORY ROLE

Plan Review program comments and Section 28 permits issued since last meeting summaries.

11.1. Plan Input Commenting Summary.....116

Plan Input and Review Monthly Summary June - August 2025.pdf.....116

11.2. Section 28 Permit Summary.....119

July-August 2025. Permit Tracking Log.pdf.....119

12. PROJECTS UPDATE

12.1. Communications Manager Projects Update.....120

Communications Manager August 2025 Agenda Project Update.pdf.....120

12.2. Lands Manager Projects Update.....122

Lands Manager August 2025 Agenda Project Update.pdf.....122

12.3. Watershed Manager Projects Update.....127

Watershed Manager August 2025 Agenda Project Update.pdf.....127

13. NEW BUSINESS

14. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on September 24, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

15. ADJOURNMENT

THAT: the time being _____ p.m. AND FURTHERTHAT there being no further business we adjourn.



June LRCA Board Meeting
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
June 26, 2025, at 4:30 PM
130 Conservation Road/Microsoft Teams

Members Present:

Albert Aiello, Grant Arnold, Robert Beatty, Donna Blunt, Rudy Buitenhuis, Dan Calvert, Trevor Giertuga, Sheelagh Hendrick, Brian Kurikka, Jim Vezina

Members Not Present

Greg Johnsen

Also Present:

Tammy Cook, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark, Ambrose, Finance Manager
Ryne Gilliam, Lands Manager
Ryan Mackett, Communications Manager
Melissa Hughson, Watershed Manager, recorder of minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

THAT: the Agenda be adopted as published.

Motion: #83/25

Motion moved by Albert Aiello and motion seconded by Sheelagh Hendrick. **CARRIED.**

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

None.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

THAT: the Minutes of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority 5th Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, May 28, 2025 be adopted as published.

Motion: #84/25

Motion moved by Albert Aiello and motion seconded by Sheelagh Hendrick. **CARRIED.**

5. IN-CAMERA AGENDA

No In-Camera was held.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1. Contract Award for Mills Block Conservation Area Redevelopment Project

Members reviewed and discussed Staff Report CONAREA-02-2025 related to awarding the contract to complete the Mills Block Conservation Area Re-Development Project.

*THAT: the Contract to complete the Mills Block Conservation Area Re-Development Project be awarded to Precambrian Trail Development Inc. for a cost of \$512,233.51 plus HST as outlined in their Bid Form dated June 17, 2025 **AND FURTHER THAT** funds will be appropriated from the Conservation Areas Capital Reserve as approved in the 2025 budget **AND FURTHER THAT** any remaining costs not covered by external funding will be appropriated from the Operating Reserve.*

Motion: #85/25

Motion moved by Sheelagh Hendrick and motion seconded by Albert Aiello. **CARRIED.**

8.2. Contract Award for the Design, Tender and Contract Administration of Sediment Removal of the Diversion Channel Project

Members reviewed and discussed Staff Report NMFC-04-2025 related to awarding the contract to complete the Design, Tender and Contract Administration of Sediment Removal of the Diversion Channel Project.

THAT: the Contract for the Design, Tender and Contract Administration of the 2025 Neebing-McIntyre Floodway Diversion Channel Sediment Removal be awarded to North Rock Engineering for a cost of \$42,500.00 not including HST.

Motion: #86/25

Motion moved by Sheelagh Hendrick and motion seconded by Albert Aiello. **CARRIED.**

9. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

9.1. Monthly Treasurer's Report

Members were provided with the monthly Treasurer's Report for May's Administration and Capital.

9.2. Standard Operating Procedure regarding Homeless Encampments on LRCA Land within the City of Thunder Bay

Members reviewed and discussed POLICY-SOP-LM-01-2025, related to Homeless Encampments on LRCA land within the City of Thunder Bay. Members concurred that there should always be two staff members to approach any identified Homeless Encampment. The Standard Operating Procedure will be amended accordingly.

THAT: Standard Operating Procedure SOP-LM-01: Homeless Encampments on LRCA Land within the City of Thunder Bay be approved.

Motion: #87/25

Motion moved by Robert Beatty and motion seconded by Brian Kurikka. **CARRIED.**

9.3. Reserve Policy Update

Members reviewed and discussed POLICY-FIN-04-2025 related to the Reserve Policy. The CAO was directed to increase the Vehicle and Equipment Reserve limit from \$125,000 to \$150,000. The policy will be updated accordingly.

THAT: Finance Policy FIN-04: Reserve Policy, Version 3.0 be adopted as outlined in Staff Report POLICY-FIN-04-2025 as amended.

Motion: #88/25

Motion moved by Brian Kurikka and motion seconded by Robert Beatty. **CARRIED.**

9.4. 2026 Preliminary Budget - Levy Review

Members reviewed and discussed the 2026 Preliminary Budget and Levy.

10. PASSING OF ACCOUNTS

THAT: having examined the accounts for the period May 1, 2025 to May 31, 2025 cheque #3561 to #3580 for \$63,206.23 and preauthorized payments of \$190,744.14 for a total of \$253,950.37, we approve their payment.

Motion: #89/25

Motion moved by Jim Vezina and motion seconded by Robert Beatty. **CARRIED.**

11. REGULATORY ROLE

Members were provided with the Plan Input and Review program comments and Section 28 permits issued since last meeting.

12. PROJECTS UPDATE

12.1. Communications Manager Projects Update

It was noted that the Children's Water Festival was very successful with 359 students attending from 12 different schools.

It was noted that Staff were successful in obtaining \$18,000 in funding from the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility from the Seniors Community Grant Program – Veterans Stream for educational programming.

12.2. Lands Manager Projects Update

It was noted that Timber planter boxes were constructed and installed by LRCA staff at the entrance signs at Cascades Conservation Area, Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area and LRCA Administrative Office.

12.3. Watershed Manager Projects Update

It was noted that Lake Superior's water level continues to be below average.

It was noted that applicable LRCA staff attended a boat tour of the Lake Superior shoreline with the consultants undertaking the Lakehead Coastal Resilience Management Plan project to view the project area. It was noted that a Steering Committee for the Coastal Resilience Management Plan project had been formed, and that a public open-house for the project would be held on July 16, 2025.

It was noted that Bathing Beach Sampling and Cyanobacteria Monitoring had begun for the 2025 sampling season.

It was noted that at the request of the City of Thunder Bay Engineering and Operations Division, LRCA had begun surface water sampling along Mosquito Creek and Pennock Creek, which will be conducted once per month, from June through October.

It was noted that Staff are working on section 36 updates to the Lakehead Source Protection Plan and source protection plan policies.

13. NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

15. ADJOURNMENT

THAT: the time being 5:16 AND FURTHER THAT there being no further business we adjourn.

Motion: #90/25

Motion moved by Brian Kurikka and motion seconded by Jim Vezina. **CARRIED.**

Chair

Chief Administrative Officer

Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks
Conservation and Source
Protection Branch
3rd Floor
40 St. Clair Ave. West
Toronto ON M4V 1M2

Ministère de l'Environnement, de la
Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Direction de la protection de la nature et
des sources
3^e étage
40, avenue St. Clair Ouest
Toronto (Ontario) M4V 1M2



June 27, 2025

MEMORANDUM TO: **Conservation Authority General Managers or Chief Administrative Officers, Conservation Authority Partners and Interested Parties**

FROM: **Kirsten Service, Director Conservation & Source Protection Branch, MECP**

RE: **Transition of Conservation Authority Program from the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks**

Good morning,

I am writing to advise you that the responsibility for the province's conservation authority program has now transitioned from the Minister of Natural Resources to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) through Orders in Council. Moving forward, the Minister of Natural Resources no longer has legislative duties or functions under the *Conservation Authorities Act* but retains leadership for natural hazard management policy and operations.

Staff supporting the important work of administering this portfolio and delivering on the government's priorities for conservation authorities will be moving to a newly created section named the Conservation Authorities Section within the Conservation and Source Protection Branch in MECP's Land and Water Division.

Stakeholders can continue to reach out to ministry staff as they have done in the past on conservation authority matters via ca.office@ontario.ca.

We thank you for your ongoing support during this time of transition. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirsten Service".

Kirsten Service, Director
Conservation and Source Protection Branch
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks



PROGRAM AREA	Neebing-McIntyre Floodway Flood Control	REPORT NO.	NMFC-06-2025
DATE PREPARED	August 7, 2025	FILE NO.	Audit File
MEETING DATE	August 27, 2025		
SUBJECT	Floodway Diversion Channel – Design of Channel Improvements in Diversion Channel		

RECOMMENDATION

Suggested Resolution

“THAT: the Contract for Detailed Design of Channel Improvements on the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway by KGS Group for a cost of \$67,500.00 not including HST be approved.”

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Links to the Strategic Plan (2023-2027):

Protect and Support:

- Continue maintaining and enhancing flood control infrastructure in an effort to minimize the impacts of riverine flooding, erosion, and sedimentation.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the summer of 2025 it was discovered that fish were stranded in the lower ponded end of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway Diversion Channel. It was surmised that fish migration had coincided with Floodway diversion in the spring of 2025. This was the first known fish stranding. The LRCA was contacted by both MNR and DFO regarding the issue. Considerable staff effort was made to confirm the presence of fish and to catch and release all fish, which were unsuccessful. The issue was ultimately addressed by opening two berms to allow fish passage from the ponds into the Floodway Channel, which is considered a temporary measure. During the process, KGS Group was requested to provide a proposal to complete a detailed design of channel improvements to permanently address the issue. Due to the time sensitive nature of the project, the CAO approved the proposal and is now requesting Board approval, per the Purchasing Policy.

The City of Thunder Bay will fund 100% of the costs, as they are the sole benefitting Member Municipality. Adequate deferred funds are available to fund the project.

DISCUSSION

On May 30, 2025, the LRCA was informed that Steelhead were reportedly trapped in the ponded areas located at the downstream end of the Diversion Channel, adjacent to the confluence with the McIntyre River and Floodway Channel. Fish had been observed in isolated ponds from Chapples Golf Course. It was also reported that MNR staff had also been advised of the issue and had relocated 10 fish from the ponds into the Floodway Channel.

It was surmised that in the spring of 2025 floodway diversion coincided with the fish migration, which resulted in fish being trapped in two areas where ponds had formed between two impassable rock berms. This was the first time this was known to have occurred.

As a result of the notification, staff were immediately deployed to the area to assess the situation, water temperatures were recorded; however, no fish were observed. On June 9, 2025, the LRCA was contacted by MNR regarding the issue and their efforts to relocate fish to date. On June 20, 2025, the LRCA was also contacted by Department of Fisheries and Oceans, who had received a report of the stranded fish. It was noted that it is an offence under Section 34.4(1) of the *Fisheries Act* to cause death of fish by means other than angling.

Staff began inspecting the area and noting water temperatures once informed and completed the following additional efforts to remove fish and address the issue:

- June 24 – rented pumps to attempt to draw down water in ponds, unsuccessful.
- June 26 – staff utilized a side-scan sonar to survey the ponds to confirm presence and approximate number of fish, estimated to be 5 in one pond and 2 in the other.
- June 27 – used seine and gill nets borrowed from MNR, unsuccessful. Attempted angling methods, unsuccessful.
- July 2 - used gill nets from boat, unsuccessful. One bass caught and released by angling methods.
- July 2 – ordered 13' x 50' seine net (\$1,905.41).
- July 8 – Licence to Collect Fish for Scientific Studies obtained from MNR.
- July 9 – angling methods, one steelhead relocated. Deployed staff constructed fish trap.
- July 14 - angling methods, one steelhead relocated.
- July 15 – Proposal received from KGS for Detailed Design of Channel Improvements in the Diversion Channel, including survey of area.
- July 18 – Seine net used on all ponds. Unsuccessful.
- July 23 – approval provided by DFO and MNR to “notch out” the berms to allow for fish passage of the stranded fish.
- July 24 – City of Thunder Bay assisted and opened berms to allow fish passage.

Considerable efforts were made to address the fish standing issue, which was eventually mitigated by the opening of the rock berms, which staff consider a temporary measure. Due to the time sensitive nature of the issue, KGS was requested to provide a proposal to assist staff in a permanent solution. KGS was sole-sourced the assignment due to their recent completion of the Floodway Integrity Study and that the project included a bathymetric survey of the ponded

area of the Diversion Channel which could be completed in conjunction with an already approved survey of the Floodway Channel that was being completed in July 2025. Additionally, they will review potential design options for the Diversion Channel to address the ponded area; prepare construction drawings and specifications for the chosen option; and prepare a report to summarize the project. It is anticipated that work will be undertaken in 2026 to address the ponded area. The cost to undertake the project is \$67,500 plus HST. Due to the unknowns regarding the timeline and feasibility of addressing the fish passage issue at the time of proposal submission, the CAO preauthorized the work prior to the August Board Meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The City of Thunder Bay will fund 100% of the costs, as they are the sole-benefitting Member Municipality. Adequate funds are within the Floodway deferred account to fund the project.

CONCLUSION

KGS was hired to complete a detailed design of channel improvements within the Diversion Channel in order to provide a permanent solution to address potential fish standing during diversion events in the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway.

BACKGROUND

The Neebing-McIntyre Floodway consists of three main components: the Diversion Structure; the Diversion Channel; and the widened and deepened Floodway Channel that outlets into Lake Superior. Construction of the Floodway was completed in 1984 and was constructed to provide riverine flood protection to the lower Neebing River and Intercity area.

The design capacity of the Floodway is to provide protection up to and including the Regional Storm. The construction of the Floodway has resulted in significant development in the Intercity Area. During high water events, the Floodway provides protection by limiting flow volumes in the lower Neebing River to 29 cubic metres per second. The flow in the lower Neebing River is controlled by the Diversion Structure that controls flows through the use of a 2.5 x 3.0 metre opening in the structure. Excess flows are diverted down the 1.5-kilometre Diversion Channel to the widened deepened Neebing-McIntyre Floodway Channel to Lake Superior.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

None.

PREPARED BY: Tammy Cook, CAO

THIS REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY:  Tammy Cook Chief Administrative Officer	DATE: August 19, 2025
--	--------------------------



PROGRAM AREA	CONSERVATION AREAS	REPORT NO.	CONAREA-03-2025
DATE PREPARED	August 14, 2025	FILE NO.	28-25-2
MEETING DATE	August 27, 2025		
SUBJECT	Traffic Counter Report - 2024		

RECOMMENDATION

Suggested Resolution:

“THAT: the Staff Report CONAREA-03-2025 be received”.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN (2023 – 2027)

Connect & Explore:

- *Manage and enhance recreational areas for current and future generations through robust land management, efficient maintenance programs and reinvestment in the land.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, TRAFx G3 vehicle counters were deployed at Cascades, Mission Island Marsh, Hazelwood Lake, Silver Harbour, Little Trout Bay, Cedar Falls, Hurkett Cove, and Mills Block Conservation Areas for the full year. Vehicle counters were newly installed at both Wishart and Mackenzie Point Conservation Areas during the months of August and September; therefore, only partial datasets were available for the 2024 Traffic Counter Report.

In 2024, it is estimated that 175,038 vehicles visited the ten conservation areas, which corresponds to 402,587 people, assuming a count of 2.3 people per vehicle. The total number of vehicles increased by 1.2% in 2024, when compared to 2023. Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area was the most visited area (29.9%), followed by Cascades Conservation Area (27.8%), Mills Block Forest (17%), Silver Harbour Conservation Area (15%), Hazelwood Lake Conservation Area (4.9%), Little Trout Bay Conservation Area (2.3%), Hurkett Cove Conservation Area (1.6%) and Cedar Falls Conservation Area (1.6%). The average monthly vehicle count increased slightly by approximately 374 vehicles from 14,393 in 2023 to 14,767 in 2024.

Trail counters were installed on the main trail at the Mills Block Conservation Area and the lookout trail at Little Trout Bay Conservation Area in 2024. The average monthly trail count for Mills Block was 786. The highest monthly trail count was recorded in October, with 1,352 people walking the trail. The lowest monthly trail count was recorded in June, with 350 people walking the trail. The average monthly trail count for Little Trout Bay was 465. The highest monthly trail count was recorded in October, with 615 people walking the trail. The lowest monthly trail count was recorded in June, with 230 people walking the trail.

Total revenue from all coin boxes and pay and display units in 2024 amounted to \$36,438.38, which equates to approximately 4% of people paying the \$5.00 parking fee via a coin box/pay and display unit during the entire year. Online sales of parking passes generated \$1,285 in revenue. In 2024, 1,871 Explore Cards were purchased and 94 were donated as promotional items with a total revenue of \$74,840. It is estimated that 43% of visitors to the areas pay for their parking using an Explore Card (assuming each cardholder visits an area 40 times a year). In total, approximately 47% of all visitors pay the parking fees via pay and display, coin box, online, or Explore Cards. Total revenue generated from Conservation Area parking fees increased by approximately 10% (\$10,406.09) in 2024 when compared to 2023 (i.e., \$112,563.38 in 2024 compared to \$102,157.29 in 2023).

The LRCA has increased enforcement at the Conservation Areas to remind visitors about parking fees and to abide by the rules and regulations outlined in the *Conservation Authorities Act*. A total of 169 parking infractions were issued in 2024; 147 at Cascades Conservation Area and 22 at Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area. Increased enforcement will continue to improve payment compliance, therefore increasing revenue in future years.

DISCUSSION

Annual vehicle traffic counter studies of Cascades, Mission Island, Hazelwood Lake, Silver Harbour, Little Trout Bay, Cedar Falls, Hurkett Cove, and Mills Block Forest Conservation Areas were completed in 2024. A seasonal trail survey was conducted on the main trail at Mills Block and lookout trail Little Trout Bay Conservation Areas. Counters were deployed from June 26 to October 31, 2024, at Mills Block and from June 1 to October 31, 2024, at Little Trout Bay. Trail counters provide further insight into the seasonal usage of the trail systems.

Methodology

The TRAFx G3 vehicle counters were placed underground in plastic valve boxes that provided protection from the surrounding soil and were covered with approximately 10 centimetres of native soil or rock on top. The counters were placed in Ziploc bags that have desiccant moisture control packets to control the moisture levels in the bag. A PVC junction box is utilized at Hazelwood Lake, which has been installed on the side of the guardrail along the hill prior to the causeway.

The counters cannot distinguish the direction of traffic (i.e., in or out); therefore, areas that only have one entrance to both enter and exit the area had their counts divided by two. The vehicle counters also do not give an estimate of the number of people per vehicle. Since the traffic counters only count vehicles, any visitors who bike or walk to the area would not be included in the usage summary. Traffic counts were not reduced for Authority vehicles visiting the areas.

The following table summarizes the circumstance and the data factor that were applied in calculating usage at the Conservation Areas:

Table 1: Usage Factors

Circumstance	Data factor	Area Applied
Only one way into and out of area	All counts are divided by 2	All areas
Estimate number of people per vehicle	Multiply by a factor of 2.3	All areas
Authority maintenance staff entering area	Not factored into estimates	All areas

In 2023, the LRCA released a Conservation Areas Survey, which indicated that the average person with an Explore Card visits the Conservation Areas approximately 39 times per year. This has been rounded to 40 for calculation purposes.

Volume of Visitors to Conservation Areas

Throughout the 2024 study period, 175,038 vehicles were counted by the traffic counters at the eight Conservation Areas that were fully assessed. Using a factor of 2.3 people per vehicle, it is estimated that the number of visitors in 2024 was 402,587. Based on these estimates, approximately 4,876 more people visited Conservation Areas compared to 2023, which equates to a 1.2% increase in usage.

Table 2: Annual Total Vehicles and Visitors to Conservation Areas

Year	Total Vehicle Count	Total Estimated Visitors
2015	138,306	304,273
2016	137,331	302,128
2017	143,297	315,253
2018	147,559	324,630
2019	n/a	n/a
2020	214,128	471,082
2021	230,997	508,193
2022	190,749*	419,648*
2023	172,918*	397,711*
2024	175,038	402,587
Average	172,258	382,833

*Includes missing data due to data gaps and estimated for unsurveyed Conservation Areas.

Trends in Usage

In 2024, Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area was the most visited area (29.9%), followed by Cascades Conservation Area (27.8%), Mills Block Forest (17%), Silver Harbour Conservation Area (15%), Hazelwood Lake Conservation Area (4.9%), Little Trout Bay Conservation Area (2.3%), Hurkett Cove Conservation Area (1.6%) and Cedar Falls Conservation Area (1.6%). MacKenzie Point and Wishart were excluded from the overall assessment due to incomplete data for the year 2024.

Overall, Sundays (19%) are the day of the week that sees the most visitors, followed by Saturday (16%), Monday (14%), Friday (13%), Tuesday (13%), Thursday (13%), and Wednesday (12%).

The average monthly vehicle count from January to December 2024 was 14,767 compared to 14,393 in 2023, which is an increase of 374 vehicles per month. The highest recorded monthly vehicle count was at Cascades, with 6,185 vehicles visiting the area in July. The lowest monthly vehicle count was at Hurkett Cove in January and February, as the access road is not maintained during the winter months.

Trail counters were installed on the main trail at the Mills Block Conservation Area and the lookout trail at Little Trout Bay Conservation Area in 2024. The average monthly trail count for Mills Block was 786. The highest monthly trail count was recorded in October, with 1,352 people walking the trail. The lowest monthly trail count was recorded in June, with 350 people walking the trail. The average monthly trail count for Little Trout Bay was 465. The highest monthly trail count was recorded in October, with 615 people walking the trail. The lowest monthly trail count was recorded in June, with 230 people walking the trail

Estimate of Visitors Paying Parking Fees

An analysis of the estimated number of vehicles paying the \$5.00 parking fee was also conducted. Based on a revenue of \$37,723.38 from coin boxes, pay and display machines, and online payments, it is estimated that 7,545 vehicles paid the parking fee. Therefore, approximately 4% of all vehicles paid the parking fee, excluding Explore Card sales. In 2024, the total revenue for Explore Card sales was \$74,840. Based on the results from the 2023 Conservation Areas Survey, the average person who owns an Explore Card pass visits the areas approximately 39 times per year which was rounded to 40 for calculations (i.e. 1,871 cards x 40 visits/year = 74,840 vehicles), it is estimated that a total 43% of visitors are paying to park in the areas by Explore Card. Therefore, in total, approximately 47% of visitors pay either in the coin box / pay and display unit or by Explore Card to park in the Conservation Areas.

Enforcement

Parking enforcement was conducted at Cascades and Mission Island Marsh Conservation Areas throughout 2024, under the City of Thunder Bay Parking By-Law. Vehicles were given a parking infraction if they did not display an Explore Card or a printed ticket from the pay and display unit. A total of 169 parking infractions were issued throughout 2024 (147 at Cascades and 22 at Mission Island). While issuing tickets, if a vehicle displayed an Explore Card or a paid parking receipt, typically a “thank you” slip was placed on their windshield, which provided a “thank you”

but also an indication that enforcement had taken place. Staff not designated as parking enforcement employees of the LRCA, would also place “Did You Forget To Pay” slips on vehicles when non-compliance was observed in the areas. To be noted, enforcement has increased significantly in 2024. In addition to LRCA Provincial Offences Officers monitoring the Conservation Areas, APEX Security was hired to patrol Mission Island Marsh and the Cascades Conservation Areas on weekends.

Additional Pay and Display Unit Installations

A fourth pay and display unit will be installed in at Mills Block Conservation Area in 2025 as part of the Mills Block Conservation Area Re-Development Project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Total revenue from all coin boxes and pay and display units in 2024 amounted to \$36,438.38, equating to 7,287 vehicles paying the \$5.00 parking fee (i.e., 4% of people paying via coin box and pay and display). A total of \$1,285.00 was generated from online payments to access the Conservation Areas. In 2024, 1,871 Explore Cards were purchased with revenue of \$74,840, and 94 additional Explore Cards were donated as promotional items. If it is assumed that each Explore Card holder visited the Conservation Areas 40 times per year, the estimated percentage of people paying by Explore Card is 43%, equating to an estimated 47% of all visitors paying.

The total revenue for 2024 including online sales, coin boxes, pay and displays, and Explore Cards equates to \$112,563.38, which was an increase of \$10,406.90 as compared to 2023, which represents a 10% increase in revenue. The increase in revenue generation correlates with more visitors to the Conservation Areas in 2024.

CONCLUSION

Based on a review of the 2024 traffic counter data, 175,038 vehicles visited Conservation Areas, which corresponds to an estimated 402,587 people visiting the area in 2024. In 2024, visitors to the area increased by 1.2%; and revenue increased by 10% when compared to 2023.

The study found that Mission Island Marsh and Cascades Conservation Area have continued to be the most visited areas, and Sundays are the most utilized day of the week. The LRCA should continue to advertise and host exciting events at the Conservation Areas to draw visitors to each location, ultimately increasing future revenues.

BACKGROUND

In an effort to estimate the usage of Conservation Areas, the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority conducts vehicle counts in its various areas. Between 2001 and 2013, the Authority undertook seasonal traffic studies utilizing a JAMAR style counter at two Authority owned properties during the summer and fall of the given year. The JAMAR counter utilized a pressure hose that detected the depression of the hose by the tires of the vehicle. The JAMAR study period typically ran from June to September/October with all equipment removed prior to any snowfall.

Since 2014, to collect annual versus seasonal vehicle count data, the Authority purchased nine TRAFx G3 vehicle counters. The TRAFx G3 vehicle counter utilizes a tiny magnetometer and embedded software to detect passing vehicles. The counter is contained in a small weatherproof box and is installed either above or below ground for the entire year. Counters are downloaded in the field with the TRAFx Dock and the data is transferred to the traffic software program at the office. The software program allows for interpretation of the data with various graphing/analyzing options.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

Executive Summary, 2024 Traffic Counter Report

A copy of the full report will circulate at the meeting and can be made available electronically.

PREPARED BY: Ryne Gilliam, Lands Manager

Michelle Willows, Environmental Planner

THIS REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY:	DATE:
 Tammy Cook Chief Administrative Officer	August 19, 2025



LAKEHEAD REGION
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Traffic Counter Report 2024

PREPARED BY:
Scott Drebit (IT Specialist)
Michelle Willows (Environmental Planner)

NOTE: This report is copyright protected. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transcribed, in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior permission. The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority produced this report. The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority and its employees do not assume any legal liability for its contents.

Executive Summary

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority conducts vehicle counts at ten Conservation Areas to estimate the usage and income from each location. In 2024, counters were deployed at Mills Block, Cascades, Mission Island Marsh, Hazelwood Lake, Silver Harbour, Little Trout Bay, Cedar Falls, and Hurkett Cove Conservation Areas. Two seasonal trail counters were installed on the main trail at Mills Block and on the lookout trail at Little Trout Bay, which connects to the James Duncan Trail system. To obtain a more accurate estimate of visitor use at MacKenzie Point and Wishart Conservation Areas, LRCA staff added two additional traffic counters at these sites in August and September; therefore, the sites only have partial data available for this report.

Traffic counter data collection began in 2014, at two Conservation Areas, in an effort to collect annual versus seasonal vehicle count data. Since the program has grown to now monitor all Conservation Areas accessible by the public. The LRCA uses TRAFx G3 vehicle counters which has a tiny magnetometer and embedded software to detect passing vehicles. The counter is contained in a small weather-proof box and can be either installed above or below ground for the entire year. Counters are downloaded in the field with the TRAFx Dock, and the data is transferred to the traffic software program at the office. The software program allows for the interpretation of the data with various graphing/analyzing options.

Based on a review of the eight areas studied in 2024, Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area is the most highly visited area, with 29.9% of vehicle traffic per area. The second most visited area is Cascades Conservation Area (27.8%), followed by Mills Block (17%), Silver Harbour Conservation Area (15%), Hazelwood Lake Conservation Area (4.9%), Little Trout Bay Conservation Area (2.3%), Hurkett Cove Conservation Area (1.6%) and Cedar Falls Conservation Area (1.6%). MacKenzie Point and Wishart were excluded from the overall assessment due to incomplete data for the year 2024.

Overall, Sundays (19%) have the highest volume of visitors, followed by Saturdays (16%), Mondays (14%), Fridays (13%), Tuesdays (13%), Thursdays (13%), and Wednesdays (12%).

In 2024, it is estimated that 175,038 vehicles visited the ten Conservation Areas, which corresponds to 402,587 people, assuming a count of 2.3 people per vehicle. The total number of vehicles increased by 1.2% in 2024, when compared to 2023. The sharp incline in visitor usage in 2020 and 2021 correlates with the COVID-19 Pandemic, where Conservation Areas were still accessible by the public to recreate during the mandated lockdown. As the borders opened and travel was once again permitted, it is expected to see a slight decline in visitor numbers.

The average monthly vehicle count from January to December 2024 was 14,767, indicating an increase when compared to data collected in 2023. The highest recorded monthly vehicle count was at Cascades Conservation Area with 6,185 vehicles visiting the area in July. The Cascades Conservation Area received an influx of visitors in the fall due to a new metal art installation by artist Luc Despres on November 12, 2024. Hurkett Cove had the lowest recorded monthly vehicle count in February, a total of 15 vehicles, as the access roads are not maintained or plowed in the winter.

A trail counter was installed on the main trail at the Mills Block and Little Trout Bay Conservation Areas in 2024. The average monthly trail count at Mills Block was 786 (Figure 21). The highest monthly trail count was recorded in October, with 1,352 people walking the trail. The lowest monthly trail count was recorded in June, with 350 people walking the trail. The average monthly trail count at Little Trout Bay was 465 (Figure 23). The highest monthly trail count was recorded in October, with 615 people walking the trail. The lowest monthly trail count was recorded in June, with 230 people walking the trail.

In 2024, a total of 1,871 Explore Cards were purchased, and 94 additional Explore Cards were given away as promotional with revenue of \$74,840. The Explore Card sales have increased significantly since their introduction in 2003, when the average sales were below 200 cards. Based on results from the 2023 Conservation Areas Survey, each Explore Card purchaser visited the Conservation Areas approximately 40 times per year, therefore it is estimated that 43% of visitors are paying by Explore Card. Total revenue from all coin boxes, pay and display units, and online payments in 2024 amounted to \$37,723.38, which equates to 7,545 (4%) vehicles paying the \$5.00 parking fee during the entire year, compared to an estimated 175,038 vehicles visiting the areas. In total, approximately 47% of all visitors pay the parking fees via pay and display, coin box, online, or Explore Card.

In 2024, total revenue from Conservation Area parking fees reached \$112,563.38, representing an approximate 10% increase (\$10,406.09) over 2023 revenue, which totaled \$102,157.29. This marks the highest annual revenue to date, surpassing previous years—\$108,327.72 in 2022 and \$83,942.62 in 2021.

On January 1, 2021, the parking fee was increased to \$5.00 per vehicle/day-use fee. In October of the same year, pay and display units were installed at Mission Island Marsh and the Cascades Conservation Areas. An additional pay and display unit was installed at the Silver Harbour Conservation Area on August 14, 2023, in an effort to increase revenue and monitor payment compliance. The coin boxes were re-located to Mills Block, Wishart, and Little Trout Bay Conservation Areas to increase the generation of revenue and reduce the dependence on municipal levy to subsidize the operation of the Conservation Areas. The LRCA has continued to promote parking fees and the necessity of a user-pay model, including the installation of large \$5.00 parking fee signage in the areas and increased advertising on social media.

It is recommended that personnel and funding permitting, staff continue the annual vehicle counts at the Conservation Areas; continue developing the marketing strategy with a focus on increasing revenue for all Conservation Areas and creating public awareness of LRCA owned Conservation Areas and associated costs; continue to promote the sale of Explore Card Parking Passes; continue to collect traffic data at MacKenzie Point and Wishart Conservation Areas; increase enforcement at the Conservation Areas; and develop a strategy to track usage of Explore Card users. In response to the increased revenue from Explore Card sales and coin boxes, consideration will be given to improving recreational opportunities at Conservation Areas during the updating of the LRCA's Strategic Plan for the next five-year period (2023-2027). The addition of the new Environmental Planner position in 2022 has provided the capacity for the Authority to achieve identified initiatives and actions in the Strategic Plan and apply for funding for various projects.



PROGRAM AREA	NEEBING-MCINTYRE FLOODWAY	REPORT NO.	NMFC-05-2025
DATE PREPARED	August 19, 2025	FILE NO.	
MEETING DATE	April 27, 2025		
SUBJECT	Removal of existing culverts and installation of new clear-span bridge at the Lyon's Drainage Channel outlet to the Neebing McIntyre Floodway		

RECOMMENDATION

Suggested Resolution

"THAT: the City of Thunder Bay is authorized to remove the existing Lyon's drainage channel outlet culverts along the north bank of the Neebing McIntyre Floodway and install a new clear-span bridge at the same location, with the requirement that the City of Thunder Bay is responsible for all future maintenance of the infrastructure."

LINK TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2027)

Not Applicable.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Thunder Bay is requesting permission from the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority to remove three deficient culverts partially located on LRCA property at the outlet of the Lyon's drainage channel along the north bank of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway near William Street and Russell Street and replace the culverts with a clear-span bridge at the same location.

No adverse impacts are anticipated to result from the removal of the existing culverts and installation of a new clear-span bridge. Staff recommended permitting the City to remove the existing culverts and install the new bridge with the requirement that the City of Thunder Bay is responsible for all future maintenance of the infrastructure.

DISCUSSION

The City of Thunder Bay is requesting permission from the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) as the landowner, to remove three deficient culverts partially located on LRCA property at the outlet of the Lyon's drainage channel along the north bank of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway (near William Street and Russell Street) and replace the culverts with a clear-span bridge at the same location. The culverts cross the City's multi-purpose trail along the floodway.

The culverts have collapsed and the area experienced ice buildup during the 2025 spring thaw causing upstream flooding issues. The proposed replacement structure exceeds the opening of

the existing culverts. The proposed soffit elevation is greater than the Regional storm elevation of 184.110 metres and will in turn prevent future ice build up at the outlet to ensure the channel properly drains.

A permit for the development has been applied for under LRCA's development regulation, O. Reg. 41/24, Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits.

No adverse impacts are anticipated to result from the removal of the existing culverts and installation of a new clear-span bridge. Staff recommended permitting the City to remove the existing culverts and install the new bridge with the requirement that the City of Thunder Bay is responsible for all future maintenance of the infrastructure.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend permitting the City of Thunder Bay remove the existing outlet culverts of the Lyon's drainage channel along the north bank of the Neebing McIntyre Floodway and install a new clear-span bridge at the same location. The City will be responsible for all future maintenance of the infrastructure.

BACKGROUND

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority owns the bed and banks of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway and a portion of the Lower Neebing River downstream of the Diversion Structure. The City of Thunder Bay, as owner of the storm sewer and drainage infrastructure requires the permission of the owner of the land upon which the facilities reside prior to undertaking upgrades and/or installations. The development will also require permits under the Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits Regulation, O. Reg. 41/24, administered by the Authority, which will be issued by staff upon Board approval of the work on Authority owned land.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

- Attachment #1 – LRCA Map – Lyon's Drainage Channel Outlet
- Attachment #2 – City of Thunder Bay General Arrangement and Removal Drawings, Lyon's Ditch Culvert Replacement at the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway

PREPARED BY: Melissa Hughson, Watershed Manager

THIS REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY:  Tammy Cook Chief Administrative Officer	DATE: August 20, 2025
--	--------------------------



Lyon's Drainage Channel Outlet

N

Legend

-  Culvert Location
-  Parcels
-  LRCA Property
-  Approximate Regulated Area

Regulated Features:

-  Regional Floodline
-  100 Year Floodline
-  Fill Line
-  Floodplain
-  Water Body
-  Provincially Significant Wetland
-  Evaluated Wetland
-  Unevaluated Wetland
-  Stream
-  River

Roads

-  Highway
-  Road
-  Street

0 25 50 75 100 m

1:2,500

This publication was produced by:
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
130 Conservation Rd.
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 6T8

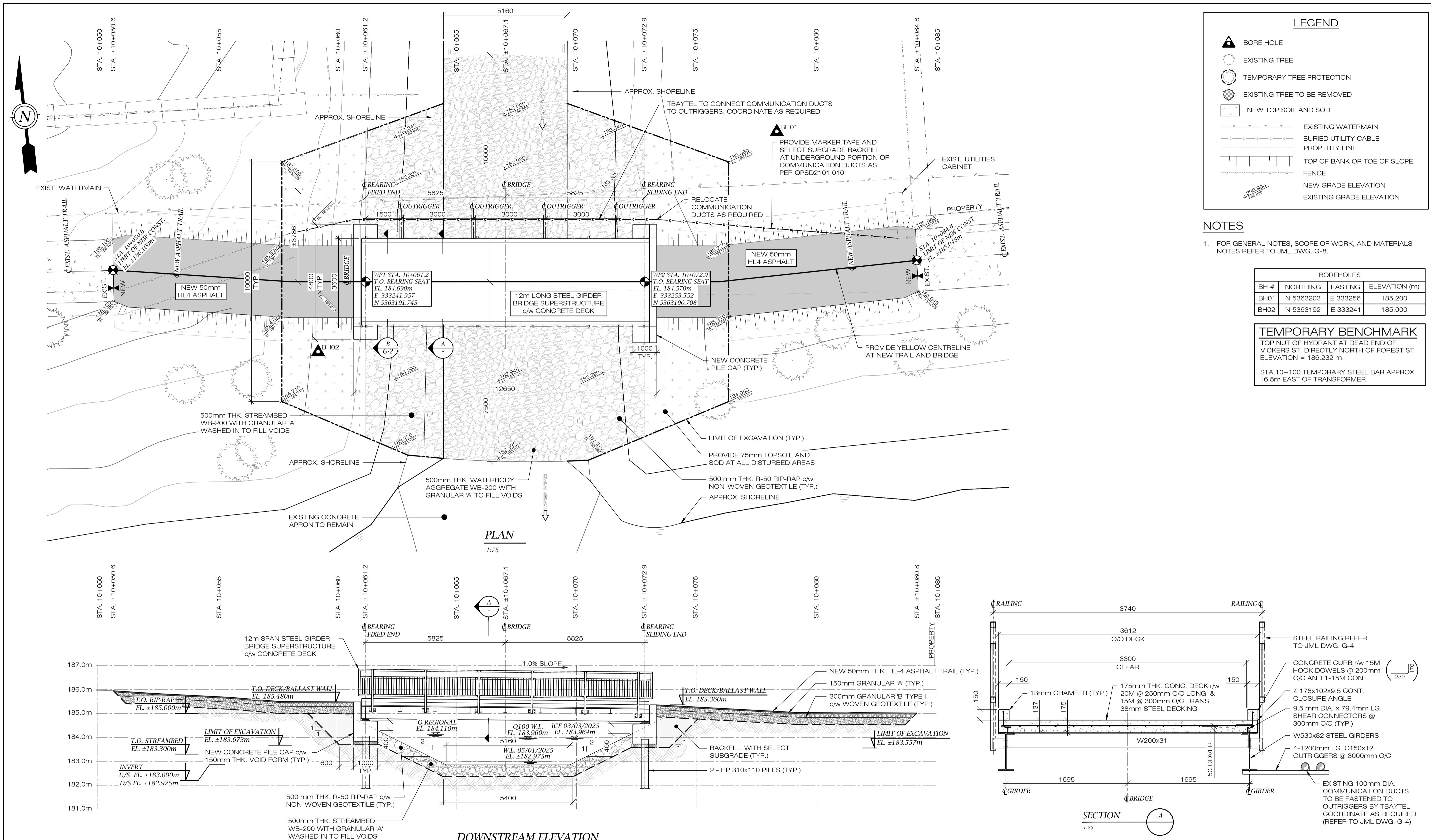
Base data used under license through the members of the Ontario Geospatial Data Exchange.

This map is illustrative only. Do not rely on it as being a precise indicator of routes or features, nor as a guide to navigation.

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 CSRS UTM Zone 16N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983 C
Units: Meter

Created by: scott
Copyright 2025, LRCA

25

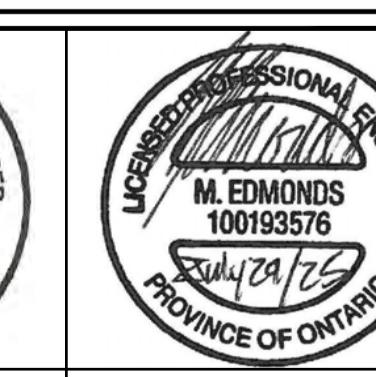
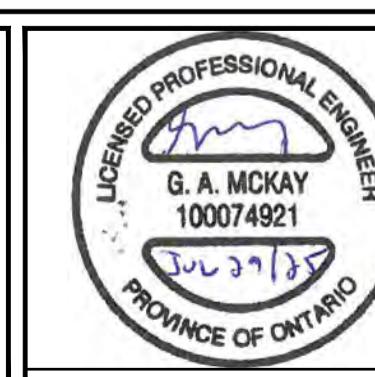


0	ISSUED FOR TENDER	DS 07/29/2025
No.	Description	By Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Revisions

JML
Engineering

105 Villa Street, 2nd Floor
Thunder Bay, ON P7A 7W5
Phone: 807.345.1131
Fax: 807.345.1229
Email: info@jmleng.com



Client

CITY OF Thunder Bay
Superior by Nature
COTB CONTRACT No. 21, 2025
LYON'S DITCH CULVERT REPLACEMENT
AT THE NEEBING-McINTYRE FLOODWAY

Drawing

GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
NEW CONSTRUCTION
PLAN, ELEVATION, AND SECTION

Scale	AS NOTED
Designer	MMC/ME
Drafter	MMC/DS
Checked by	GAM
CAD File No.	2025036set.dwg
Ref. No.	2025036
Plot Scale	1:1
Rev.	G-1

2025 TREASURER'S REPORT MONTHLY EXPENSES				
	2025 BUDGET	June	TOTAL TO DATE	BALANCE REMAINING
REVENUE				
Provincial Grants	316,923	150,940	230,783	86,140
Municipal Levy	1,913,993	-	1,913,993	-
Self Generated	684,785	147,797	446,932	237,853
Other Revenue	1,659,262	4,725	255,701	1,403,561
TOTAL REVENUE	4,574,963	303,462	2,847,409	1,727,554
EXPENSES				
Category 1 Mandatory Programs and Services				
Corporate Services	895,324	70,732	510,918	384,406
Risk of Natural Hazards	2,085,099	100,109	312,619	1,772,480
Conservation and Management of Lands owned and controlled by the Authority	1,044,201	55,875	252,261	791,940
Source Water Protection	55,883	5,120	40,856	15,027
Other Programs and Services	22,104	1,062	7,840	14,264
Total Category 1 Mandatory Programs and Services	4,102,611	232,898	1,124,495	2,978,116
Category 2 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the Request of a Municipality				
Mapping Services	18,527	-	1,526	17,001
Total Category 2 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the Request of a Municipality	18,527	-	1,526	17,001
Category 3 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services				
Education	99,481	29,036	52,900	46,581
Stewardship	354,344	48,577	151,921	202,423
Total Category 3 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services	453,825	77,612	204,822	249,003
Total All Expenses	4,574,963	310,511	1,330,843	3,244,120

2025 TREASURER'S REPORT MONTHLY EXPENSES				
	2025 BUDGET	July	TOTAL TO DATE	BALANCE REMAINING
REVENUE				
Provincial Grants	316,923	190,201	270,044	46,879
Municipal Levy	1,913,993	-	1,913,993	-
Self Generated	684,785	76,661	523,626	161,159
Other Revenue	1,659,262	17,514	273,611	1,385,651
TOTAL REVENUE	4,574,963	284,376	2,981,274	1,593,689
EXPENSES				
Category 1 Mandatory Programs and Services				
Corporate Services	895,324	55,603	566,639	328,685
Risk of Natural Hazards	2,085,099	87,977	400,596	1,684,503
Conservation and Management of Lands owned and controlled by the Authority	1,044,201	108,170	360,431	683,770
Source Water Protection	55,883	4,646	45,503	10,380
Other Programs and Services	22,104	1,290	9,130	12,974
Total Category 1 Mandatory Programs and Services	4,102,611	257,686	1,382,299	2,720,312
Category 2 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the Request of a Municipality				
Mapping Services	18,527	2,812	4,339	14,188
Total Category 2 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the Request of a Municipality	18,527	2,812	4,339	14,188
Category 3 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services				
Education	99,481	1,929	34,848	64,633
Stewardship	354,344	17,745	189,647	164,697
Total Category 3 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services	453,825	19,674	224,496	229,329
Total All Expenses	4,574,963	280,172	1,611,133	2,963,830
Surplus(Deficit)		-	4,204	1,370,141
			-	1,370,141



PROGRAM AREA	FINANCE	REPORT NO.	FIN-09-2025
DATE PREPARED	August 19, 2025	FILE NO.	
MEETING DATE	August 27, 2025		
SUBJECT	Draft 2026 Budget		

RECOMMENDATION

Suggested Resolution

"THAT: the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority approves the 2026 Draft Budget, Version 1.0, dated August 27, 2025, for consultation purposes."

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Govern and Enhance:

- *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 organizational capacity to provide new and developing program areas.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026 Draft Budget has been set at \$3,789,246 which includes a total levy of \$1,965,046 of which all Member Municipalities pay \$1,183,866 with the remainder being sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay (\$781,780). The 2026 budget contains a 3.50% increase to levy-all compared to 2025. The total increase to the City of Thunder Bay for levy-all and sole benefitting levy is 2.6%.

The 2026 Budget has been formatted to adhere to the requirements in O. Reg. 402/22. Staff recommend approving the Draft Budget for consultation purposes, with final budget approval at the November Board Meeting. The Draft Budget Summary will be provided to Member Municipalities and posted on the Governance section of the LRCA website as required.

DISCUSSION

The 2026 Draft Budget document contains details for the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority's (LRCA) 2026 planned operations and capital activity. The Budget has been set at \$3,789,246 which includes a total levy of \$1,965,046 of which all Member Municipalities pay \$1,183,866 with the remainder being sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay (\$781,180).

It is noted that at the time of budget preparation confirmation had not been received that the long-standing provincial Section 39 Transfer Payment was forthcoming in 2025 from the province. For budget purposes, it has been assumed it will be provided. If funding does not materialize, staff will come back to the Board with a revised budget, including the use of reserve funds from the Operating Capital Category.

The budget results in a 3.50% increase in levy-all in 2026 compared to 2025. The 2026 budget requires a 3.50% increase to maintain its current level of service.

Financial pressures anticipated in 2026 include: potential increases to insurance costs, increased cost for salaries and benefits; and increased costs of goods and services due to tariffs. The previously approved staff wage increase for 2026 is 3.0%, with wages representing the majority of the budget. Additionally, a Compensation Review is currently underway, which may also impact salary costs.

Programs have been categorized into three mandated categories including:

- Category 1: Mandatory Programs and Services
- Category 2: Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the request of a Municipality
- Category 3: Non-Mandatory Programs and Services

Highlights of the 2026 Budget expenditures include:

- Continuation of the annual programming including:
 - Plan Review,
 - Development Regulations,
 - Flood Forecasting and Warning,
 - Operation and maintenance of LRCA owned properties,
 - Stewardship, and
 - Education programming.
- Capital improvements at the Conservation Areas:
 - Replace two concrete vault toilets with one at the Hazelwood beach area.
 - Repairs to the privy at Mission Island.
 - Repairs to asphalt cracks in the trail and parking lot and paint lines at Mission Island
 - Decommission old parking lot at Mills Block
- Other items:
 - Office plumbing repair.
 - Garage storage units.
 - Continuation of wayfinding signage installation using new designs in Conservation Areas.
 - Design of Urban Conservation Area at LRCA Administration Office.
 - Update of Asset Management Plan.
 - 10-year update of Forest Management Plans.

Overall, the 2026 Budget reflects the short-term objectives of the Authority and considers long-term requirements to ensure the LRCA can provide sustainable benefits to the watershed residents.

The full Draft 2026 Budget Explanatory Document and the Budget Summary are attached along with the Budget Checklist. As mandated, the budget summary will be posted on the website and circulated to all Member Municipalities for consultation purposes, along with the offer to attend a Council meeting if requested.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2026 Draft Budget has been set at \$3,789,246 which includes a total levy of \$1,965,046 of which all Member Municipalities pay \$1,183,892 with the remainder being sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay (\$781,180). The 2026 budget contains a 3.50% increase to levy-all compared to 2025. The total increase to the City of Thunder Bay for levy-all and sole benefitting levy is 2.6%. It is noted that each Member Municipalities levy impact will be determined by the current value assessment for 2026.

As requested by a Board Member, a 2.5% increase to levy-all was reviewed. To achieve a 2.5% increase to levy-all, administration would need to reduce levy by approximately \$11,000. The proposed draft budget at a 3.5% increase is forecasting a \$122,000 deficit and if levy is reduced by \$11,000 the deficit will increase to \$133,000. The budgeted deficit will be offset by current surplus which at the end of December 31, 2024, is \$188,888.16. It is noted that the approved staff wage increase for 2026 is 3.0% and that there are unknowns related to potential wage increases that may come out of the Compensation Review. This study will be presented at the September Board Meeting. Any approved wage increases will be at the discretion of the Board and will be included in the final budget presented in November. It is anticipated that in the future the administration surplus will be negligible in the coming years due to reduced cash flow and earned interest due to upcoming major maintenance.

CONCLUSION

The 2026 Draft Budget is being presented for review. The 2026 Budget conforms to the required format as per O. Reg. 402/22. As outlined in the process, approval of the draft budget is recommended for consultation purposes.

BACKGROUND

O. Reg. 402/22: Budget and Apportionment specifies that the 2024 budget and all subsequent budgets must adhere to this regulation. It provides details on the budget process and municipal apportionment methods for levying participating municipalities and includes revocation of the previous regulations that governed municipal levies (O. Reg. 670/00 and O. Reg. 139/96).

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

2026 Budget Checklist

2026 Draft Budget Summary

2026 Draft Budget, August 2025, Version 1.0

PREPARED BY:

Mark Ambrose, Finance Manager

Tammy Cook, CAO

THIS REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY: Tammy Cook Chief Administrative Officer	 DATE: August 20, 2025
---	---

Budget Summary Checklist

Per O. Reg. 402/22: Budget and Apportionment, the 2024 budget and every subsequent budget must be prepared in accordance with the regulation.

Budget Year - 2026		
Task	Date	Completed
First Phase		
Identify all sources of revenue including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees • Donations • Grants • Self-generated • Reserve funds • Deferred funds • From agreements • Other sources • Total revenue 	June	June
Identify operating expenses into Cat. 1,2, 3. Specify total operating expenses for year.	June	June
Identify capital costs into Cat. 1,2 ,3. Specify total capital costs for year.	June	June
Apportion operating expense or capital costs to participating municipalities (levy-all, and sole-benefitting).	June	June
Preliminary % levy-all increase Board Review	June Board Meeting	June 26, 2025
Second Phase – Draft Budget and Consultations		
Prepare Draft Explanatory Budget Document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include all items in First Phase • Specify if the authority considered opportunities to raise and use self-generated revenue to help finance the authority's operations, including the programs and services it provides, a description of what the authority considered. 	July/August	August 2025
Prepare Budget Summary	July/August	August 2025
Meeting on Draft Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold majority vote to approve Draft Budget for consultation purposes 	August Board Meeting	August 27, 2025

Revision Date: June 16, 2025

Send each participating municipality a copy of approved draft budget including apportionment	September	
Post draft budget on Governance section of LRCA website	September	
Conduct consultations with participating municipalities as warranted	September	
Third Phase – Final Budget Approval		
Provide notice of Board Meeting to participating municipalities of Final Budget approval <u>30</u> days prior to meeting to approve Final Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include most recent draft of budget • Specify levy apportionments 	September/October	
Hold a recorded weighted majority vote to approve apportionment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51% or more is required to approve. • Tie is a lost vote 	November Board Meeting	
Hold a recorded majority vote to approve Final Budget	November Board Meeting	
Provide copy of Final Budget to Minister	December	
Provide copy of Final Budget to participating municipalities	December	
Post Final Budget on Governance section of website	December	

2026 LRCA Draft Budget Summary

2026 Draft Budget	
3.50% Levy-All increase compared to 2025	
Total Levy	
Levy-All	\$1,183,866 (31.24%)
City of Thunder Bay Sole-Benefitting	\$781,180 (20.62%)
Total Provincial Grant Revenue**	\$372,092(9.82%)
Total Federal Grant Revenue	\$389,095(10.27%)
Total Donation Revenue	\$31,000(0.82%)
Total Other Grants	\$54,691(1.44.%)
Self-Generated Revenue	\$623,456(16.45%)
Deferred/Surplus	\$246,670(6.51%)
Reserve Appropriations	\$107,196(2.83%)
Total Budget	\$3,789,246

** Section 39 Transfer Payment unconfirmed for 2026

2026 Total Levy-All Compared to 2025						
Municipality	2025 CVA %	2025 Levy \$	2026 CVA %	2026 Levy \$	\$ Change	% Change
Thunder Bay	85.66	979,814	85.66	1,013,626	33,812	3.45
Conmee	0.45	5,147	0.45	5,204	57	1.20
Dorion	0.29	3,318	0.29	3,433	115	3.49
Gillies	0.25	2,860	0.25	2,960	100	3.51
Neebing	2.26	25,853	2.26	26,638	785	3.04
O'Connor	0.48	5,490	0.48	5,684	194	3.51
Oliver Paipoonge	5.63	64,399	5.63	67,363	2,964	4.60
Shuniah	4.99	56,964	4.99	58,959	1,994	3.50
	100	1,143,845	100	1,183,866	40,021	3.50

*CVA – Current Value Assessment

2026 Sole-Benefitting Levy Compared to 2025						
Municipality	2023	2024	2025	2026	2025 vs 2026 \$ Change	2025 vs 2026 % Change
Thunder Bay	716,497	744,916	770,138	781,180	11,042	1.43

Sole-benefitting: Neebing-McIntyre Floodway, Victor Street Erosion, Maintaining Floodplain Mapping

2026 Total Levy Compared to 2025						
City portion of Levy-All + City Sole-Benefitting Levy						
Municipality	2023	2024	2025	2026	2025 vs 2026 \$ Change	2025 vs 2026 % Change
Thunder Bay	1,641,731	1,697,120	1,749,951	1,794,806	44,855	2.56

2026 LRCA Draft Budget Summary

2026 Budget Notes

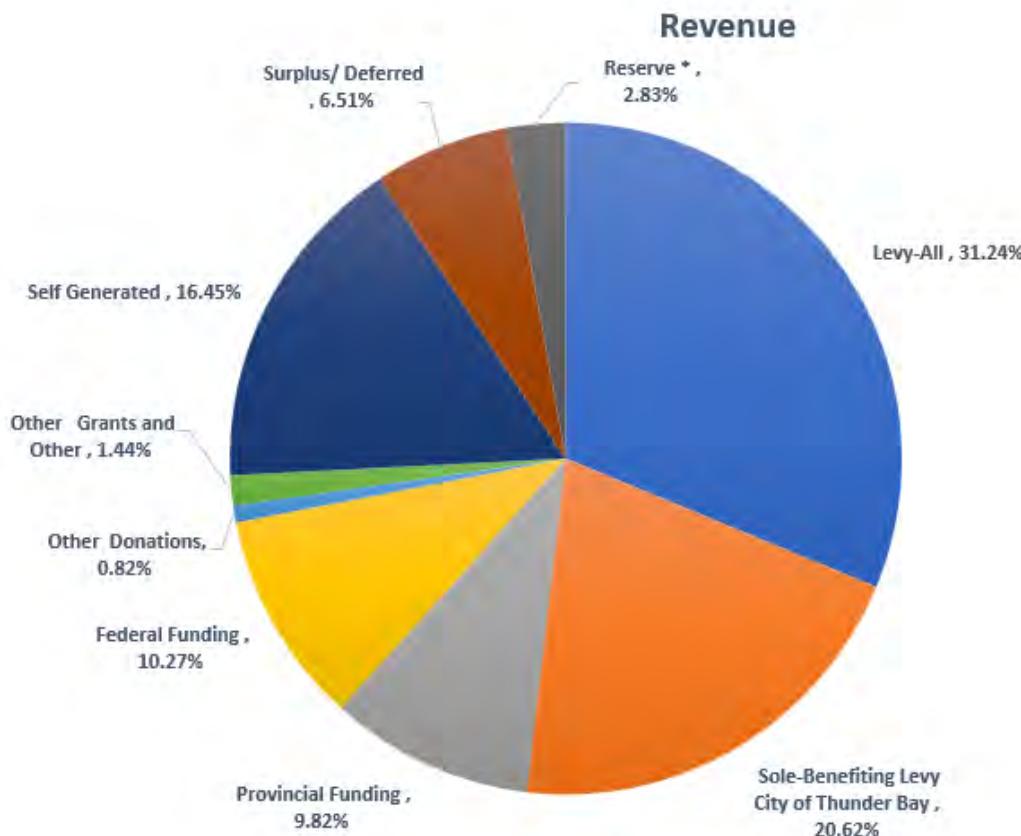
- Levy-all increase 2026 versus 2025 = 3.50%
 - 2025 increase – 3.08%
- Minimal to no increases are feasible in the short term but are not realistic for the long-term operation of the LRCA.
- Provincial funding anticipated to be provided in 2025 (included as revenue in budget)
 - Section 39 Transfer Payment - \$150,940
 - Source Water Protection Transfer Payment - \$72,652
 - Other One-Time Grants - \$148,500

2026 Budget Highlights

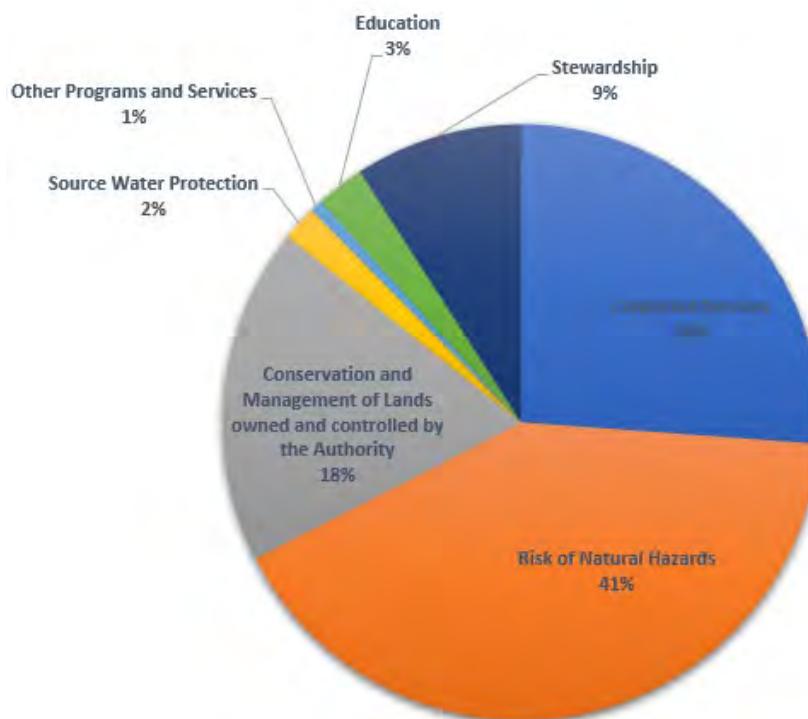
Highlights of the 2025 Budget expenditures include:

- Continuation of annual programming including:
 - Plan Review,
 - Development Regulations,
 - Watershed monitoring,
 - Flood Forecasting and Warning,
 - Operation and maintenance of LRCA owned properties,
 - Stewardship (no levy), and
 - Education programming (no levy).
- Capital improvements at the Conservation Areas:
 - Replace two concrete vault toilets with one at the Hazelwood beach area.
 - Repairs to the privy at Mission Island.
 - Repairs to asphalt cracks in the trail and parking lot and paint lines at Mission Island.
 - Decommission old parking lot at Mills Block.
- Other items:
 - Office plumbing repair.
 - Garage storage units.
 - Continuation of wayfinding signage installation using new designs in Conservation Areas.
 - Update of Asset Management Plan.
 - 10-year update of Forest Management Plans.
 - Design of Urban Conservation Area (LRCA Administration Office location).
- Planned Reserve withdrawals:
 - Administration - \$30,000
 - Vehicle and Equipment - \$9,100
 - Forest Management - \$32,796
 - Conservation Area Capital - \$52,300

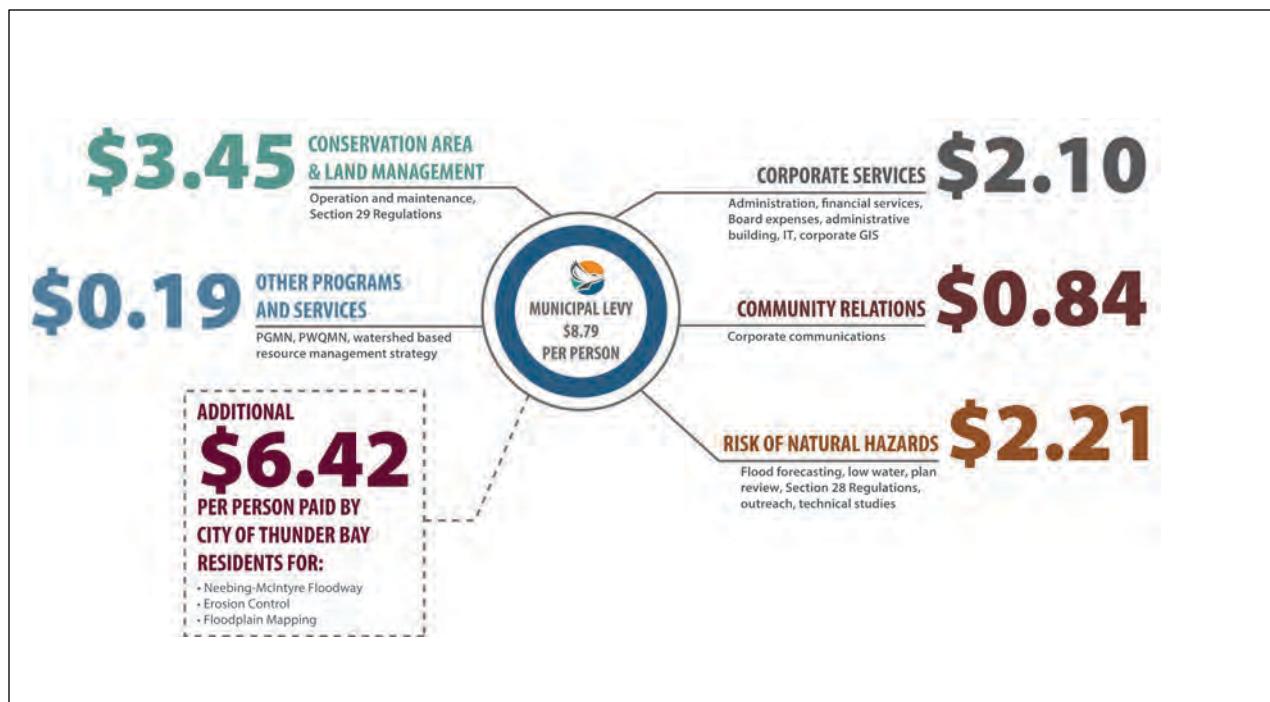
2026 LRCA Draft Budget Summary



Expenditures



2026 LRCA Draft Budget Summary





LAKEHEAD REGION
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

2026
Draft
Budget

August 2025
Version 1.0

PREPARED BY:
Tammy Cook, CAO
Mark Ambrose, Finance Manager

VERSION		Approval Date	RESOLUTION #
2026 Version 1.0	Draft Budget for consultation	August 27, 2025	
2026 Version 2.0	Levy		
	Reserve Withdrawals		
	Budget Document		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026 Budget document contains details for the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority's (LRCA) planned operations and capital activity. The 2026 total Budget is \$3,789,246 which includes a total levy of \$1,965,046 of which all Member Municipalities pay \$1,183,866 with the remainder being sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay (\$781,180).

It is noted that at the time of budget preparation confirmation had not been received that the long-standing provincial Section 39 Transfer Payment was forthcoming in 2026/2027 from the province. For budget purposes, it has been assumed it will be provided. If funding does not materialize, staff will come back to the Board with a revised budget, including the use of Reserve Funds from the Operating Capital Category. It is noted that notification of provincial funding is consistently late.

The budget results in a 3.50% increase in levy-all in 2026 compared to 2025. The 2026 budget requires a 3.50% increase in order to maintain its current level of service, which is at current cost-of-living increases.

Financial pressures anticipated in 2026 include: Salaries and Wage increases; increase in fuel costs; and increased costs of goods and services due to inflation.

Programs have been categorized into three mandated categories including:

- Category 1: Mandatory Programs and Services
- Category 2: Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the request of a Municipality
- Category 3: Non-Mandatory Programs and Services

Highlights of the 2026 Budget expenditures include:

- Continuation of the annual programming including:
 - Plan Review,
 - Development Regulations,
 - Flood Forecasting and Warning,
 - Operation and maintenance of LRCA owned properties,
 - Stewardship, and
 - Education programming.
- Capital improvements at the Conservation Areas:
 - Replace two concrete vault toilets with one at the Hazelwood beach area.
 - Repairs to the privy at Mission Island
 - Repairs to asphalt cracks in the trail and parking lot and paint lines at Mission Island
 - Decommission old parking lot at Mills Block

- Other items:
 - Office plumbing repair
 - Garage storage units
 - Continuation of wayfinding signage installation using new designs in Conservation Areas
 - Update of Asset Management Plan
 - 10-year update of Forest Management Plans
 - Design of Urban Conservation Area (LRCA Administration Office location)

Opportunities considered to raise and use self-generated revenue to fund the authority's operations:

- User fees (i.e., permit and plan review fees, education fees, inquiry fees)
- Explore Card/pay and display units/coin boxes – parking/day use fee at Conservation Areas
- Sales of native plants
- External funding will be continually sought throughout the year.

The Watershed Biologist, Watershed Stewardship Technician and Education Coordinator positions will continue using non-levy funds for non-mandatory programs.

The total Budget Levy is summarized in Appendix A including the amount applicable to each Member Municipality. Appendix B outlines the cost for each Member Municipality based on per resident, per household and \$100,000 of assessed value.

Overall, the 2026 Budget reflects the short-term objectives of the Authority and considers long-term requirements to ensure the LRCA can provide sustainable benefits to the watershed residents, while meeting the Authority's legislative responsibilities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	7
2	BACKGROUND	8
2.1	Mandate.....	8
2.1.1	Purpose	9
2.1.2	Founding Principles.....	9
2.1.3	Objects of an Authority.....	9
2.2	Organization Details.....	9
2.2.1	Area of Jurisdiction	9
2.2.2	Board of Directors/Members.....	10
	Agricultural Representative	10
2.2.3	Staff Complement.....	11
2.2.4	Conservation and Management of Land	11
	Conservation Areas	12
	Other Land Owned by the LRCA	12
2.2.5	Watershed Monitoring	13
2.3	Sources of Funding.....	13
2.3.1	Grant Revenue	15
2.3.1.1	Provincial Section 39 Transfer Payment	15
2.3.1.2	Source Water Protection Funding.....	16
2.3.1.3	Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Funding	16
2.3.2	Municipal Levy	17
2.3.2.1	Levy – All.....	17
2.3.2.2	Sole- Benefitting Levy.....	17
2.4	Modified Current Value Assessment (MCVA).....	17
2.5	Budget Approval Process	17
2.5.1	O. Reg. 402/22: Budget and Apportionment.....	18
2.5.2	Budget Approval Methods.....	19
2.6	Asset Management Plan	21
2.7	Reserve Policy	21
2.8	Purchasing Policy	21
2.9	Lakehead Conservation Foundation	22
2.10	CONSERVATION ONTARIO.....	22
2.11	Programs and Services.....	22
2.11.1	Category 1 – Mandatory Programs and services.....	23
2.11.2	Category 2 – Non-Mandatory Programs and services at the request of a municipality.....	24
2.11.3	Category 3 – Non-MANDATORY Programs and SERVICES.....	25
2.11.4	Corporate Services	27
3	2026 BUDGET.....	28
	BuDgeted Revenue	28

Consideration of opportunities to raise and use self-generated revenue	30
Budgeted Expenditures.....	31
Administration	33
Community Relations.....	34
Vehicle and Equipment Program	35
Information technology management.....	36
Corporate GIS.....	36
3.1 Category 1: Mandatory programs and services.....	37
3.1.1 Risk of Natural Hazards.....	37
Floodplain Mapping	37
Technical Studies	38
CommUnciations and Outreach.....	39
Flood Forecasting and Warning	39
Drought and Low Water Response	40
Infrastructure: Neebing-McIntyre Floodway	41
Infrastructure: Victor Street Erosion	43
Review of Proposals under an Act	44
Plan Review Comments	45
Administering and Enforcing the Act (Section 28 Development Regulations). 46	46
3.1.2 Conservation and Management of Lands owned and controlled by the LRCA	46
Conservation Areas	47
Administer Section 29 Regulations in Conservation Areas	49
Other Owned Land.....	50
3.1.3 Source Water Protection	51
3.1.4 Other Programs and services	52
Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN).....	52
Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN)	53
3.2 Category 2: Non-Mandatory Programs at the request of a Municipality.....	53
Mapping Service.....	53
Mosquito and Pennock Creek Monitoring.....	54
3.3 Category 3: Non-Mandatory Programs.....	55
3.3.1 Education	55
Environmental Education.....	55
Nature Interpretive Programming	55

3.3.2	Stewardship	56
	Superior Stewards Program	56
	Tree Seedling Program.....	57
	Private Land Stewardship	58
	Seeds for Conservation	60
	Sea lamprey.....	60
4	RESERVE APPROPRIATIONS	62
4.1	Percentage of Target Reserve Limit Reached	63
4.2	2026 Planned Appropriations to and from Reserves	64
5	CONCLUSION.....	65
6	RECOMMENDATIONS	66

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1: Projected Revenues
- Figure 2: Projected Expenses by Program
- Figure 3: 2026 Budget Summary
- Figure 4: Levy-all Comparison for the period of 2018 to 2026
- Figure 5: Budget Levy Comparison
- Figure 6: 2026 Compared to 2025 Levy Cost Comparison

LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix A: 2026 Budget Summary
- Appendix B: Budget Levy Comparison
- Appendix C: Passed Resolutions

1 INTRODUCTION

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) draft budget for 2026 is \$3,789,246 which includes a total levy of \$1,965,046 of which all Member Municipalities pay \$1,183,866 with the remainder being sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay (\$781,180).

The budget results in a 3.50% increase in levy-all in 2026 compared to 2025. The 2026 budget requires a 3.50% increase in order to maintain its current level of service, which is at the current cost-of-living increases.

The total Budget Levy is summarized in Appendix A including the amount applicable to each Member Municipality, which includes a summary of the breakdown between Operating and Capital. Appendix B outlines the cost for each Member Municipality based on per resident, per household and \$100,000 of assessed value.

It is noted that at the time of budget preparation confirmation had not been received that the long-standing provincial Section 39 was forthcoming for the 2026/2027 fiscal budget year from the province. For budget purposes, it has been assumed it will be provided. If funding does not materialize, staff will come back to the Board with a revised budget, including the use of Reserve Funds from the Operating Capital Category. It is noted that notification of provincial funding is consistently late.

2 BACKGROUND

The LRCA is a community-based environmental protection and advisory agency, established in 1954 (initially the Neebing Valley Conservation Authority) by the Province of Ontario at the request of municipalities in the Lakehead watershed. The LRCA's purpose is to provide for the organization and delivery of programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in the Lakehead Watershed. Conservation Authorities undertake a broad range of programs, including: watershed management, erosion control, Flood Forecasting and Warning, recreation and land management, water level monitoring, Plan Review, environmental education and stewardship. We improve quality of life by actively providing Conservation Areas for semi-passive recreation and environmental education opportunities.

Our integrated approach to resource management leads to a wide range of programs and projects, which are aimed at keeping our watersheds healthy. We improve quality of life by actively providing open space and protecting life and property from flooding and erosion, as well as restoring and conserving aquatic and natural habitats. In addition to serving our watershed residents, we also provide advice and counsel to all levels of government regarding natural hazards.

The LRCA is one of 36 Conservation Authorities across Ontario, including one of five in Northern Ontario.

Historically Conservation Authorities were administered by Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR); however, in 2018, Conservation Authorities were moved under the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). In September 2022, Conservation Authorities were moved back under the administration of MNR and in June 2025, were moved back under the administration of MECP.

2.1 MANDATE

In 2017, the LRCA adopted vision and mission statements and in January 2018, the LRCA adopted its first ever Five-Year Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2022. The Strategic Plan was updated in 2022 for the next five-year period (2023-2027). The Strategic Plan identifies four main priorities including: conserve and sustain; protect and support; connect and explore; and govern and enhance. LRCA's vision and mission statements are as follows:

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

Mission: To lead the conservation and protection of the Lakehead Watershed.

Action items will be drafted taking into consideration the identified initiatives in the Strategic Plan, which will be incorporated into future work plans and budgets, as well as the overall business of the Authority.

2.1.1 PURPOSE

With the passing of Bill 139 on December 12, 2017, a purpose statement was added to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, which states:

The purpose of this Act is to provide for the organization and delivery of programs and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in watersheds in Ontario.

2.1.2 FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Conservation Authorities are based on three fundamental principles:

- Municipal and Provincial partnership
- Local initiative and involvement
- Management of natural resources on a watershed basis.

2.1.3 OBJECTS OF AN AUTHORITY

Per Section 20(1) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*,

The objects of an authority are to provide, in an area over which it has jurisdiction,

- a) the mandatory programs and services required under Section 21.1;
- b) any municipal programs and services that may be provided under section 21.1.1; and
- c) any other program or services that may be provided under section 21.1.2.

2.2 ORGANIZATION DETAILS

2.2.1 AREA OF JURISDICTION

The LRCA Area of Jurisdiction (2,719 square kilometres) includes:

- City of Thunder Bay
- Municipality of Neebing
- Municipality of Shuniah
- Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge
- Township of Conmee
- Township of O'Connor
- Township of Gillies

- Township of Dorion

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is responsible for areas outside the jurisdiction of the Authority.

The scientific boundary of the Lakehead Watershed is 11,526 square kilometres.

2.2.2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS/MEMBERS

Policy and budget decisions are made by a Board of Directors comprised of eleven members appointed by LRCA's Member Municipalities. The number of representatives appointed as Members of the LRCA Board of Directors is based on population as outlined in subsection 2(2) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Per Bill 229, Schedule 6, as of the end of the 2022 term of the Board, at least 70% of the appointees to the Board must be municipal councillors, unless an exception has been granted by the Minister, at the request of a municipality (per Section 14(1.1), 14(1.2) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*). Therefore, unless an exception has been granted each Member Municipality must only appoint municipal councillors, with the exception being the City of Thunder Bay who has four Members. They will be required, at a minimum, to appoint three municipal councillors. Prior to this change, the City of Thunder Bay appointed two municipal councillors and two citizen appointees. Historically, other municipalities had periodically appointed citizens to the Board.

As of February 2, 2021 (per Section 17 (1.1)(1.2)(1.3) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*) the term of the Chair and Vice-Chair is limited to one year and they can serve for no more than two consecutive terms. Positions must rotate between participating municipalities; therefore, the Board cannot appoint the succeeding chair from the same municipality as the current chair. A Conservation Authority or a municipality can request permission for a longer term to the Minister.

Four exceptions have been granted by the Minister to date. For the 2022 election both the Chair and Vice-Chair were approved to continue their terms if so elected. Additionally, for the 2023 and 2024 elections, the Chair was approved to continue her term if so elected. A fourth exception was granted for both the Chair and Vice-Chair to hold their positions if so elected for the 2025 and 2026 elections.

AGRICULTURAL REPRESENTATIVE

Per Bill 229, Schedule 6, as of February 2, 2021, the Minister may appoint an Agricultural Representative to the Board of Directors. If appointed the Agricultural Representative can not vote on enlarging, amalgamating or dissolving an authority or any budgetary matter. Their term can be up to four years as determined by the Minister. Per diems for

this position would be paid by the Ministry. To date no agricultural representative has been appointed to the LRCA Board.

2.2.3 STAFF COMPLEMENT

In 2026, the Authority will have a full-time equivalent (FTE) staff complement of 13.67 who deliver the programs/services on behalf of the LRCA Board, which include:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Finance Manager
- Watershed Manager
- Lands Manager
- Communications Manager
- Development Regulations Officer
- GIS/IT Specialist
- Admin Clerk/Receptionist
- Finance Assistant (part-time)
- Field Operations Lead Hand
- Environmental Planner
- Watershed Biologist
- Watershed Stewardship Technician
- Regulations and Planning Assistant

Recurring contract employees that amount to an equivalent of 1.4 FTEs include:

- Education Co-ordinator (39 weeks)
- Field Operations Assistant (33 weeks)

Seasonal employees that amount to an equivalent of 1.2 FTE include:

- Four summer field staff (15 weeks – students)
- Two Assistant Water Resources Technologists (16 weeks – students)

2.2.4 CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND

The LRCA owns a total of 2,597 hectares of land. The lands owned by the LRCA offers a diversity of services in the watershed including recreation, water management, protection of natural heritage features, flood protection, erosion control and forest management. The properties owned by the LRCA fall into three land use categories including:

1. Conservation Areas for Passive Recreation
2. Conservation Authority Administrative Area
3. Management Area

The categories of land are grouped in the Inventory of Programs into two classifications, Conservation Areas and Other Owned land, which includes the Administrative Office and Management Areas.

CONSERVATION AREAS

The LRCA owns and maintains ten Conservation Areas (1,550 hectares), which provide semi-passive recreational use opportunities to the public and access to Lake Superior. The areas include:

- Hurkett Cove (Township of Dorion)
- Cascades (City of Thunder Bay)
- Silver Harbour (Municipality of Shuniah)
- Cedar Falls (Township of O'Connor)
- Little Trout Bay (Municipality of Neebing)
- Hazelwood Lake (unincorporated Township of Gorham)
- MacKenzie Point (Municipality of Shuniah)
- Mission Island Marsh (City of Thunder Bay)
- Mills Block (City of Thunder Bay)
- Wishart (unincorporated Township of Gorham)

In 2022, Mills Block Forest and Wishart Forest were renamed as Conservation Areas. Previously, they were referred to as Managed Forests.

Boat launches at Silver Harbour and Little Trout Bay Conservation Areas provide access to Lake Superior.

As a private landowner, the LRCA pays property taxes to the Municipality/Township in which the land resides.

OTHER LAND OWNED BY THE LRCA

The LRCA owns 3.4 hectares at 130 Conservation Road in Thunder Bay which is where the LRCA's Administrative office and grounds are located.

Management Areas include floodplain and erosion control lands, forest management properties, nature reserves, Neebing-McIntyre Floodway and the Hope and Memory Garden.

The LRCA owns and maintains one Forest Management property known as Williams Forest, located in the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge and is not open to the public. That property, as well as other Conservation Areas have Forest Management Plans under the Managed Forest Tax Incentive program (MFTIP), which provides some tax relief as well as provides a plan for proper long-term forest management. As warranted, harvesting occurs with revenue used to maintain the forest management area and the associated

Forest Management Plans. Surplus generated funds in a given year are allocated to the Forest Management Reserve.

The LRCA also owns other conservation, floodplain and erosion lands as well as the banks and bed of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway. Property taxes are paid on all lands.

Conservation of Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP) is applied to annually to reduce the taxes in recognition of natural heritage features for the following lands:

- 330 Beaver Avenue
- Wakefield Common
- Hurkett Cove
- Mills Block

2.2.5 WATERSHED MONITORING

The LRCA conducts a variety of watershed monitoring throughout the year including:

- Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Program (in partnership with MECP)
- Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program (in partnership with MECP)
- Streamflow Gauges (in partnership with Water Survey of Canada)
- Precipitation Gauges (some in partnership with Water Survey of Canada)
- Neebing River Climate Change Monitoring Station (in partnership with MECP)
- Dorion Fish Culture Station Monitoring Station (new as of 2018, in partnership with MNR)
- Bathing Beach Sampling (Hazelwood Lake and Mission Island Marsh)
- Blue/Green Algae Monitoring (Hazelwood Lake, Mission Island Marsh, Hurkett, Silver Harbour)
- Snow Surveys
- Floodway Channel water level monitoring (automated in 2024)
- Ontario Low Water Response
- Invasive Species Monitoring (Neebing-McIntyre Floodway and Conservation Areas and other areas subject to funding)

2.3 SOURCES OF FUNDING

LRCA funding comes from several sources:

- Grant Revenue
 - MNR – Provincial Section 39 Transfer Payment
 - MNR – Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECl) (when applicable and approved)
 - MECP – Source Water Protection
- Special Projects (programs/available funds vary from year to year)

- TD Friends of the Environment
- Enbridge
- Ontario Power Generation
- Canada Summer Jobs
- Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) - Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative
- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) – COA, Wetland Conservation Partnership Program
- Invasive Species Centre – Invasive Species Action Fund
- Invasive Phragmites Control Fund
- Green Shovels Collaborative – Invasive Phragmites Control Fund
- TC Energy
- Northern, Ontario Heritage Corporation (NOHFC)
- Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)
- Parks Canada
- CPRA Green Jobs Canada
- Municipal Levy
 - Levy – All
 - Levy - Sole-Benefitting
- Other Revenue
 - Interest
 - Contracts - Department of Fisheries and Oceans Wolf River Weir Inspections, Sea Lamprey Trapping
 - Coin Boxes/Pay and Display – parking fees/day use fees at Conservation Areas
 - Explore Card sales
 - Lakehead Conservation Foundation donation
 - Multi-purpose Room rentals
 - Forest Management harvesting
 - Property Rentals
 - Mapping Service
 - Donations
 - Lawyer Request Fees
 - Development Regulation Permit Fees
 - Plan Review Fees
 - Education Fees
 - Calendar advertising
 - Seeds for Conservation Sales
 - Other

2.3.1 GRANT REVENUE

2.3.1.1 PROVINCIAL SECTION 39 TRANSFER PAYMENT

The *Conservation Authorities Act* Section 39 Provincial “Operating” Grant funds the Conservation Authority in undertaking provincially mandated activities that include:

1. Flood/Erosion Operations (flood and erosion control structures, Flood Forecasting and Warning, ice management) and
2. Hazard Prevention (Plan Input, Hazard Information).

Eligible activities include:

- Flood and Erosion Operations
 - Operation of Flood Control Structures
 - Routine/Minor Maintenance of Flood Control Structures
 - Preventative Maintenance of Flood Control Structures
 - Operation of Erosion Control Structures
 - Routine/minor Maintenance of Erosion Control Structures
 - Preventative Maintenance of Erosion Control Structures
 - Flood Forecasting and Warning-System Operation
 - Ice Management
- Hazard Management
 - Plan Input (Official Plan/Amendment review only)
 - Information (i.e., Watershed Planning/Technical Studies)
- Administration

Funds are provided by lump sum payment for work undertaken from April 1 to March 31 of any given year. Funding is contingent of having local matching levy from the Member Municipalities. Interim and Year End reports are submitted by the LRCA to the MNR.

Between 1998 and 2019, Provincial Section 39 Transfer Payments to all 36 Conservation Authorities remained at the same level of \$7,400,000. In 2019, mid-way through the budget year, the Provincial Government announced a 48-50% funding cut to all Conservation Authority Section 39 Transfer Payments, effective for the current year. LRCA's transfer payment was reduced from \$292,380 to \$150,940, resulting in a funding reduction of 48% (\$141,440). This resulted in an emergency mid-year amendment to the budget, which resulted in a cancelation of all planned training, advertising, and capital expenditure spending at Conservation Areas as well as delaying some planned repairs. Funds were reallocated to ensure that the provincially mandated programs were still delivered.

At the time of budget preparation, no confirmation had been received that this long-standing Transfer Payment is forthcoming for the 2026/2027 fiscal year. For budget purposes, staff have budgeted as though the funding would be provided at the reduced

level of \$150,940. If this funding is not forthcoming, it is proposed to utilize funds from the Operating Capital Reserve, which was established to provide operating funds in the event of loss of funds in a given year. Notification of the approval of this funding is consistently delayed annually.

2.3.1.2 SOURCE WATER PROTECTION FUNDING

The MECP provides 100% funding to administer the Source Protection program through Provincial Transfer Payment, which is a program under the *Clean Water Act* to protect municipal drinking water systems, which there are two in the LRCA Area of Jurisdiction (i.e., Bare Point Water Treatment Plant (City of Thunder Bay) and Rosslyn Drinking Water System (Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge)).

This program runs on the Provincial fiscal year of April 1 to March 31 of any given year. In 2024, a multi-year funding agreement was signed for the period of April 1, 2024 to March 31 2027 for a total of \$226,007.48 in funding. Total funded FTEs over the period are 0.55 FTE for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 and 0.5 FTE for 2026-2027.

It is noted that if the Drinking Water Source Protection Transfer Payment was ever eliminated, the cost to administer this mandatory program would be applicable to the City of Thunder Bay and the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge as sole-benefitting municipalities.

2.3.1.3 WATER AND EROSION CONTROL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

MNR administers the Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECl) funding program, which typically provides an annual five-million-dollar capital investment to fund major maintenance required to maintain Conservation Authority dams and other flood and erosion control structures.

The WECl program provides matching funding to Conservation Authorities for studies or major maintenance of water or erosion control structures that are either owned by or maintained by Conservation Authorities. Local benefiting municipalities provide matching funds. A committee made up of five Conservation Authority representatives, one MNR and one Conservation Ontario representative, oversees the program and determines the priority list of eligible projects based on need and level of risk.

Funding is not guaranteed year to year. The LRCA applies for funding when major maintenance or studies are required on the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway or if major maintenance (i.e., soil nailing) is required on City of Thunder Bay owned land on Victor Street along the banks of the Kaministiquia River.

2.3.2 MUNICIPAL LEVY

2.3.2.1 LEVY – ALL

Operation and Capital Project costs that benefit all Member Municipalities is levied to all Member Municipalities based on their proportion of the Modified Current Value Assessment (see Section 2.4).

2.3.2.2 SOLE- BENEFITTING LEVY

A sole-benefitting levy is applied to a single Municipality for work undertaken by the LRCA upon which they are sole-benefitting. The operation and maintenance of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway and Victor Street erosion protection (City owned land) are included in the sole-benefitting levy of the City of Thunder Bay. Another example is the completion, updating or maintenance of floodplain mapping, where the municipality/municipalities upon which the watershed is located are levied for that cost of the project.

2.4 MODIFIED CURRENT VALUE ASSESSMENT (MCVA)

Modified Current Value Assessment (MCVA) means a method of apportioning an authority's operating and capital costs that is based on the MCVA of the properties within the authority's area of jurisdiction (as outlined in O. Reg. 402/22). Municipal Current Value Assessment values are modified for conservation authorities where only a portion of a municipality falls within an area of jurisdiction of an authority. Since the LRCA's Member Municipalities are geographically entirely within the LRCA area of jurisdiction, no modification of the CVA is required. The Modified Current Value Assessment (MCVA) data is provided by the MNR annually, which is then used to calculate the levy-all for each Member Municipality. Each Conservation Authority has an Agreement regarding the use of Modified Property Assessment Information with MNR. Generally, this data is received by the Conservation Authority in late August. Since adoption of the CVA method, the levy percentage for Member Municipalities fluctuates annually.

For population data, reliance on the information from Statistics Canada is used, as the information received within the MCVA is not reflective of the actual population in our Member Municipalities. Representation on the Board is determined by the population of the applicable Member Municipality as detailed in the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

2.5 BUDGET APPROVAL PROCESS

The *Conservation Authorities Act*, and O. Reg. 402/22 outline the process of approving Conservation Authority budgets, specifically the process of approving the annual Municipal levies.

2.5.1 O. REG. 402/22: BUDGET AND APPORTIONMENT

O. Reg. 402/22: Budget and Apportionment specifies that the 2024 budget and all subsequent budgets must adhere to this regulation. It provides details on the budget process and municipal apportionment methods for levying participating municipalities and includes revocation of the previous regulations that governed municipal levies (O. Reg. 670/00 and O. Reg. 139/96).

The regulated budget process includes:

First Phase

Budget must include:

- All sources of revenue (other than municipal levy)
- Categorize operating expenses into Category 1, 2 and 3
- Categorize capital expenses into Category 1, 2 and 3
- Amount of levy for each Member Municipality
- Specify if the Authority considered opportunities to raise and use self-generated revenue to help finance the authority's operations, including the programs and services it provides, a description of what the authority considered.

Budget must:

- Apply any relevant revenue to specific programs to offset levy.
- Apply Modified Current Value Apportionment method to determine levy for each program.
- Apply Benefit Based Apportionment method to sole benefitting programs (i.e., Floodway, Victor Street Erosion)

Second Phase

Draft Budget Process:

1. Notify all Member Municipalities of Draft Budget meeting if a Member Municipality will owe levy for Category 1 *Clean Water Act* programs and Services.
 - a. Advise of amounts owing or to be owed for Category 1 *Clean Water Act* programs and services (n/a to LRCA)
2. Hold meeting to consider draft budget.
3. Hold vote on whether or not to approve the draft budget for consultation.
 - a. If there is a levy for Category 1 *Clean Water Act* programs and services, hold a separate vote of Members from applicable municipalities for that portion of the draft budget (n/a to LRCA).
 - b. Vote is a one-member-one vote method.
4. Send Member Municipalities a copy of the Draft Budget and all financial information relating to the apportionment of operating and capital expenses.
5. Post a copy of the Draft Budget and financial information on Governance section of Authority's website.

6. Consult as necessary with Member Municipalities on draft budget in order to finalize final budget.

Third Phase

Final Budget Approval Process:

1. Notify all Member Municipalities of Budget meeting.
 - a. Notification must be at least 30 days prior to meeting.
 - b. Must include copy of most recent draft of the budget.
 - c. Must specify amount of levy for the given year.
2. Hold meeting to approve budget.
3. Hold a recorded vote to municipal levy/amounts owing.
 - a. If there are any Category 1 *Clean Water Act* apportionments, hold a vote with participating municipality representatives (n/a to LRCA).
 - b. Weighted vote to approve municipal levy/amounts owing.
 - c. Authority can not send a notice of apportionment unless a vote has occurred.
4. Hold a recorded vote to approve final budget.
 - a. One -member-one vote to approve final Budget Document.
5. “Promptly” after the final budget process is approved, provide a copy of the final budget to the Minister and each Member Municipality.
6. Post final budget on the Authority’s website in the Governance section.

2.5.2 BUDGET APPROVAL METHODS

Quorum must be achieved to approve the budget (i.e., 6 of 11 members must be present. Voting by proxy is not permitted.

For each phase of the budget approval process, the following budget approval method shall be used:

- Draft Budget
 - Decide on whether to approve draft budget for consultation
 - one-member-one-vote method
- Final Budget
 - Municipal levy/amounts owing
 - recorded weighted majority vote
 - Budget document
 - recorded one-member-one-vote

Weighted Majority Vote:

As outlined O. Reg. 402/22 Section 19, a recorded weighted vote is to be conducted to approve the levy/amounts owing in the Final Budget.

The following rules apply:

- Each Member's vote shall be weighted according to the ratio of the MCVA for applicable Member Municipality.
- Approval requires 51%, based on the weighted percentage of those present.
- In the case of a tie vote, the vote is lost.
- If a municipality appoints more than one member to the authority, each member's votes shall be equal to the municipality's weighted vote divided by the number of members the municipality appoints to the authority.
- A municipality shall not have a weighted vote of more than 50 percent of the total weighted value for all the votes to be cast unless the municipality appoints more than 50 percent of the members to the authority.
- Absent members percentage does not carry to the members present from their Municipality (only applies to the City of Thunder Bay, as they have four members).
- Must be a recorded vote.

For weighted voting, the weighting of the votes is based on the applicable year's MCVA values provided annually by MNR. In the case of the City of Thunder Bay, where their MCVA apportionment is greater than 50%, their members are equally apportioned 50% of the total vote, as no one municipality can hold greater than 50 percent of the vote for the weighted majority vote.

Weighted Vote Allocations:

Municipality	# of Members	2026 CVA (%)	Vote %
City of Thunder Bay	1	85.62	12.5
	1		12.5
	1		12.5
	1		12.5
Conmee	1	0.44	1.53
Dorion	1	0.29	1.01
Gillies	1	0.25	0.87
Neebing	1	2.25	7.82
O'Connor	1	0.48	1.67
Oliver Paipoonge	1	5.69	19.78
Shuniah	1	4.98	17.32
TOTAL	11	100	100

Example: Conmee = $(0.44 / (100-85.62)) \times 50$

One-Member-One-Vote Method:

A one-member one-vote (i.e., majority vote) is to be conducted to approve consultation of the draft budget and approval of the Budget Document. Each member present has an equal weighting of their vote.

Majority Vote Allocations:

Municipality	# of Members	% Vote
City of Thunder Bay	1	9.09
	1	9.09
	1	9.09
	1	9.09
Conmee	1	9.09
Dorion	1	9.09
Gillies	1	9.09
Neebing	1	9.09
O'Connor	1	9.09
Oliver Paipoonge	1	9.09
Shuniah	1	9.09
TOTAL	11	100

2.6 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

KGS Consulting Group completed the LRCA Asset Management Plan (AMP) in July 2021 and will be updated in 2026. The AMP provided insight into the current condition of the Authority's assets and a timeline indicating recommended repairs, maintenance and replacement of assets. The goal of the AMP is to provide a strategy to achieve and maintain the desired level of services for each asset while maintaining financial goals.

2.7 RESERVE POLICY

The Authority has an approved Reserve Policy (FIN-04) which outlines how the various reserves are to be managed. A summary of planned appropriations to and from Reserves is included in Section 4.

2.8 PURCHASING POLICY

The LRCA approved Purchasing Policy (FIN-06), which was updated in 2019, guides all purchasing.

2.9 LAKEHEAD CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

The Lakehead Conservation Foundation was formed in 1987 as it became evident that funding from the Province of Ontario was decreasing. Since inception, the Foundation has donated \$836,290 towards these programs. Their annual contribution has been typically \$20,000 and is allocated for environmental education and other special projects.

Due to COVID-19 in 2021 the annual Dinner and Auction and the Wine Tasting Fundraising events were cancelled, and in 2022 the Dinner Auction was cancelled resulting in a loss in revenue of approximately \$20,000.00 each year, and subsequently no donation to the LRCA. The LCF hosted both events in 2024, however only plans on hosting the wine tasting event in 2025 and beyond. Future donations will be determined based on the success of the events.

2.10 CONSERVATION ONTARIO

Conservation Ontario (CO) is the network or umbrella organization of the 36 Conservation Authorities similar to the Association of Municipalities (AMO). Decisions made at CO Council Meetings do not bind individual Conservation Authorities unless specifically adopted by the Conservation Authority. CO advocates on behalf of the collective and has been instrumental during the current *Conservation Authorities Act* review process. Typically, both the Chair and CAO attend the quarterly CO Council meetings; however, since COVID, meetings have been mostly virtual, with two meetings in person per year. The LRCA pays an annual levy to CO.

2.11 PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

In October 2021 the MECP released O. Reg. 686/21: Mandatory Programs and Services and O. Reg. 687/21: Transition Plans and Agreements under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. The purpose of the transition period is to provide conservation authorities and municipalities with the time to address changes to the budgeting and levy process based on the delivery of mandatory programs and services (Category 1), municipal programs and services (Category 2), and other programs and services (Category 3) and to reach agreements.

As required in O. Reg. 687/21: Transition Plans and Agreements the following requirements have been completed:

- **Transition Plan** (November 24, 2021): Included a timeline/workplan to meet the requirements for the first and second phases of the transition period.
- **Inventory of Programs and Services** (February 28, 2022): List of all the programs and services that the authority was providing at that time, and those that it

intends to provide as of January 1, 2024. Summarized programs into Category 1, 2 and 3 and detailed how they were funded.

The Act outlines programs areas which have been categorized into three categories:

2.11.1 CATEGORY 1 – MANDATORY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Mandatory programs and Services (as outline in the Act)

21.1 (1) An authority shall provide the following programs or services within its area of jurisdiction:

1. *A program or service that meets any of the following descriptions and that has been prescribed by the regulations:*
 - i. *Programs and services related to the risk of natural hazards*
 - ii. *Programs and services related to the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority, including any interests in land registered on title.*
 - iii. *Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities as a source protection authority under the Clean Water Act, 2006.*
 - iv. *Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities under an Act prescribed by the regulations.*
3. *A program or service, other than a program or service described in paragraph 1, that has been prescribed by the regulations on or before the first anniversary of the day prescribed under clause 40 (3) (i).*

Within the budget the Mandatory Programs and Services are categorized under each of the following categories:

- Risk of Natural Hazards
 - Floodplain Mapping
 - Technical Studies
 - Communications and Outreach
 - Flood Forecasting and Warning
 - Drought and Low Water Response
 - Infrastructure: Neebing-McIntyre Floodway
 - Infrastructure: Victor Street Erosion

- Review of Proposal Under an Act
- Plan Review Comments
- Administering and Enforcing the Act (Section 28 Development Regulations)
- Conservation and Management of Lands
 - Conservation Areas
 - Administer Section 29 Regulations in Conservation Areas
 - Other owned land
- Source Protection
- Other Programs and Services
 - Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring: Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network
 - Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring: Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network
 - Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy

2.11.2 CATEGORY 2 – NON-MANDATORY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AT THE REQUEST OF A MUNICIPALITY

Municipal programs and services (as outlined in the Act)

21.1.1 (1) *An authority may provide within its area of jurisdiction municipal programs and services that the authority agrees to provide on behalf of a municipality situated in whole or in part within its area of jurisdiction under a memorandum of understanding or such other agreement as may be entered into with the municipality in respect of the programs and services.*

On November 28, 2022, the *More Homes Built Faster Act* (Bill 23) was passed and subsequently O. Reg. 596/22 (Prescribed Acts) came into affect on January 1, 2023. This legislation impacts the LRCA's Category 2 programs as outlined in the Inventory of Programs.

Within LRCA's current Inventory of Programs, the Category 2 programs include:

- Mapping Service
 - GIS mapping service provided to Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge, Township of Dorion and the Lakehead Rural Planning Board, as a fee for service.

Effective January 1, 2023, the following section was added to the *Conservation Authorities Act*:

21.1.1 (1.1) *An authority shall not provide under subsection (1), within its area of jurisdiction, a municipal program or service related to reviewing and commenting on a proposal, application or other matter made under a prescribed Act.*

Where the prescribed Acts are outlined in O. Reg. 596/22:

The following Acts are prescribed for the purposes of subsections 21.1.1 (1.1) and 21.1.2 (1.1) of the Act:

1. The *Aggregate Resources Act*.
2. The *Condominium Act, 1998*.
3. The *Drainage Act*.
4. The *Endangered Species Act, 2007*.
5. The *Environmental Assessment Act*.
6. The *Environmental Protection Act*.
7. The *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act*.
8. The *Ontario Heritage Act*.
9. The *Ontario Water Resources Act*.
10. The *Planning Act*.

The new legislation prohibits the LRCA from providing the Category 2 program “Natural Heritage Planning Review” program as proposed to the City of Thunder Bay. Staff have removed this program from the Inventory of Programs. The “GIS Mapping Service” program will continue to be offered to the applicable municipalities.

2.11.3 CATEGORY 3 – NON-MANDATORY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Other programs and services (as outlined in the Act)

21.1.2 (1) *In addition to programs and services described in section 21.1 and 21.1.1, an authority may provide, within its area of jurisdiction, any other programs and services that it determines are advisable to further the purposes of this Act.*

NEW AS OF JANUARY 1, 2023 - (1.1) *An authority shall not provide under subsection (1), within its area of jurisdiction, a program or service related to reviewing and commenting on a proposal, application or other matter made under a prescribed Act.*

(2) *On and after the day prescribed by the regulations, if financing under section 25 or 27 by a participating municipality is necessary in order for the authority to provide such programs and service authorized to be provided under subsection (1), the program or service shall not be provided by the authority unless an agreement that meets the following criteria has been entered into between the authority and the participating municipality in respect of the program and service:*

1. *The agreement must provide for the participating municipality to pay to the authority,*
 - i. *An apportioned amount under section 25 in connection with a project related to the program or service, or*
 - ii. *An apportioned amount under section 27 in respect of the program or service.*
2. *The agreement must include provisions setting out on which the agreement terminates and a requirement that it be reviewed by the parties within the period specified in the regulations for the purpose of determining whether or not the agreement is to be renewed by the parties.*
3. *The agreement must meet such other requirements as may be prescribed by the regulations.*

Category 3 programs included in the budget include:

- Education
 - Environmental Education
 - Nature Interpretive Programming
- Stewardship
 - Superior Stewards
 - Tree Seedling
 - Private Land Stewardship
 - Seeds for Conservation
 - Sea Lamprey

2.11.4 CORPORATE SERVICES

Corporate Services that apply to all program areas are considered an enabling service and are categorized as a separate budget category. They are considered to be applicable to all Member Municipalities and are part of the levy-all. Subservices within this category include:

- Corporate Services
 - Administration
 - Community Relations
 - Vehicle and Equipment Program
 - Information Technology Management
 - Corporate GIS

The *Conservation Authorities Act* defines the following term:

Operating expenses: include,

- a) salaries, per diems and travel expenses of employees and members of an authority,
- b) rent and other office costs,
- c) program expenses,
- d) costs that are related to the operation or maintenance of a project, but not including the project's capital costs, and
- e) such other costs as may be prescribed by regulation.

3 2026 BUDGET

The 2026 Draft Budget document contains details for the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority's (LRCA) planned operations and capital activity. The Budget has been set at \$3,789,246 which includes a total levy of \$1,965,046 of which all Member Municipalities pay \$1,183,866 with the remainder being sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay (\$781,180). The draft budget has a 3.50% levy-all increase compared to the 2025 approved budget.

BUDGETED REVENUE

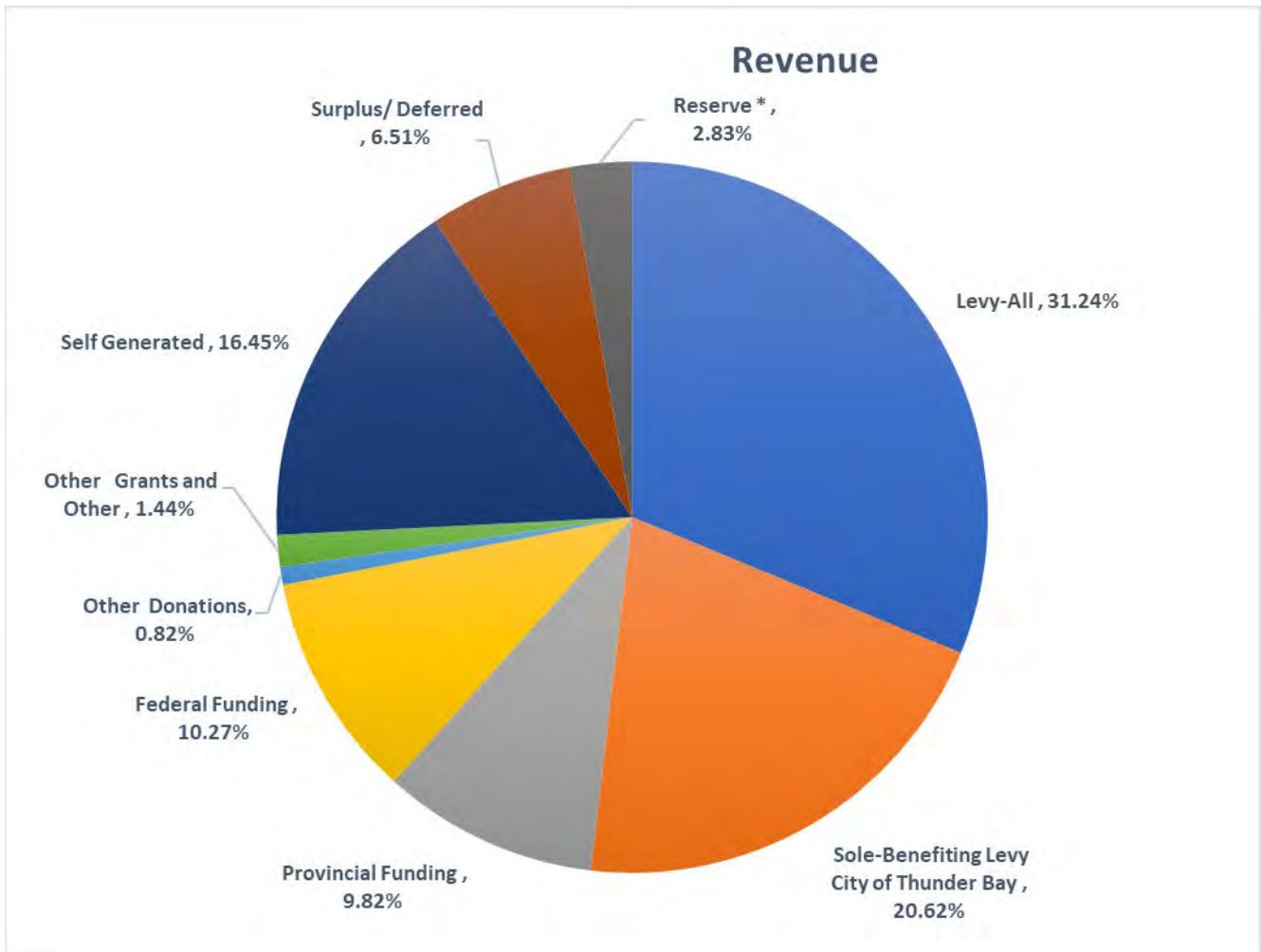
The LRCA draws revenue from a variety of sources:

- Municipal levies
- Provincial transfer payments (MNR)
- Other Transfer Payments for specific purposes (i.e., Source Water Protection)
- User fees (i.e., parking fees, education programs, permit fees, etc.)
- Reserves and prior years deferred revenue
- Other miscellaneous sources of revenue (i.e., property rental, interest, etc.)
- Other funding sources (varies from year to year)
-

**See Section 2.3 – Sources of Funding for a detailed analysis*

Projected Revenues by category:

FIGURE 1: 2026 PROJECTED REVENUES



Significant revenue sources budgeted for 2026 include the following:

- \$1,183,866 – Levy-all
- \$781,180 – Levy – City of Thunder Bay (sole-benefitting)
- \$150,940 – MNR Section 39 Provincial Transfer Payment
- \$301.125 - NRCan Climate Resilient Coastal Communities Program
- \$72.652 – MECP – Source Water Protection
- \$8,500 – MECP NWP Admin Controls Protocol
- \$49,550 – MECP Indigenous Community Garden
- \$40,000 – Invasive Phragmites Control Fund
- \$30,000 – Thunder Bay Rotary Club (Seeds for Conservation)
- \$30,000 – Parks Canada Hurkett Cove Cattail
- \$40,000 – MNR Shoreline Protection
- \$77,500 – ECCC GFLEI Floodway Habitat Corridor
- \$30,000 – MECP Restoration Maintenance of Current Sites
- \$233,000 – Interest income

Other grants that the LRCA intends to apply for in 2026 include:

- Canada Summer Jobs (\$11,000)

This budget has been prepared based on estimates of potential revenue from various funding sources, which will be dependent on successful funding applications. Some of the projects included in the budget will only be completed if grant funding is successfully obtained. Additional applications for other programs may be completed as funding becomes available throughout the year.

CONSIDERATION OF OPPORTUNITIES TO RAISE AND USE SELF-GENERATED REVENUE

Per O. Reg. 402/22, Section 13(2)8, the budget must provide a description of what opportunities the authority considered to raise and use self-generated revenue to help finance the authority's operations, including the programs and services it provides.

Currently the LRCA's self generated revenue is derived from fee for service and user fees from the following sources:

- Interest
- Mapping Service (Category 2 program)
- Education programming fees (Category 3 program)

- Plan Review fees
- Section 28 Permit fees
- Lawyer Inquiry fees
- Explore Card sales
- Coin boxes for parking/day use fees at:
 - Mills Block Forest
 - Little Trout Bay
 - Cedar Falls
 - Hurkett Cove
 - Wishart Forest
 - Hazelwood Lake
- Pay and Display Units for parking fees (enforced under City of Thunder Bay Parking By-Law)
 - Mission Island Marsh
 - Cascades
 - Silver Harbour
- Seeds for Conservation native seed and plant sales

The Fee Schedule will be reviewed annually to determine the annual fee rates, as approved by the Board. On December 28, 2022, a Minister's Direction was issued to Conservation Authorities prohibiting them from changing fees related to reviewing and commenting on planning and development related proposals or land use planning policies, or for permits issued by the Conservation Authority for the period of January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. The freeze was extended for 2024 and 2025. At the time of budget creation, it was not known if fees were going to be frozen again for 2026.

Increased revenue will be used to offset levy and reinvest in amenities provided at Conservation Areas.

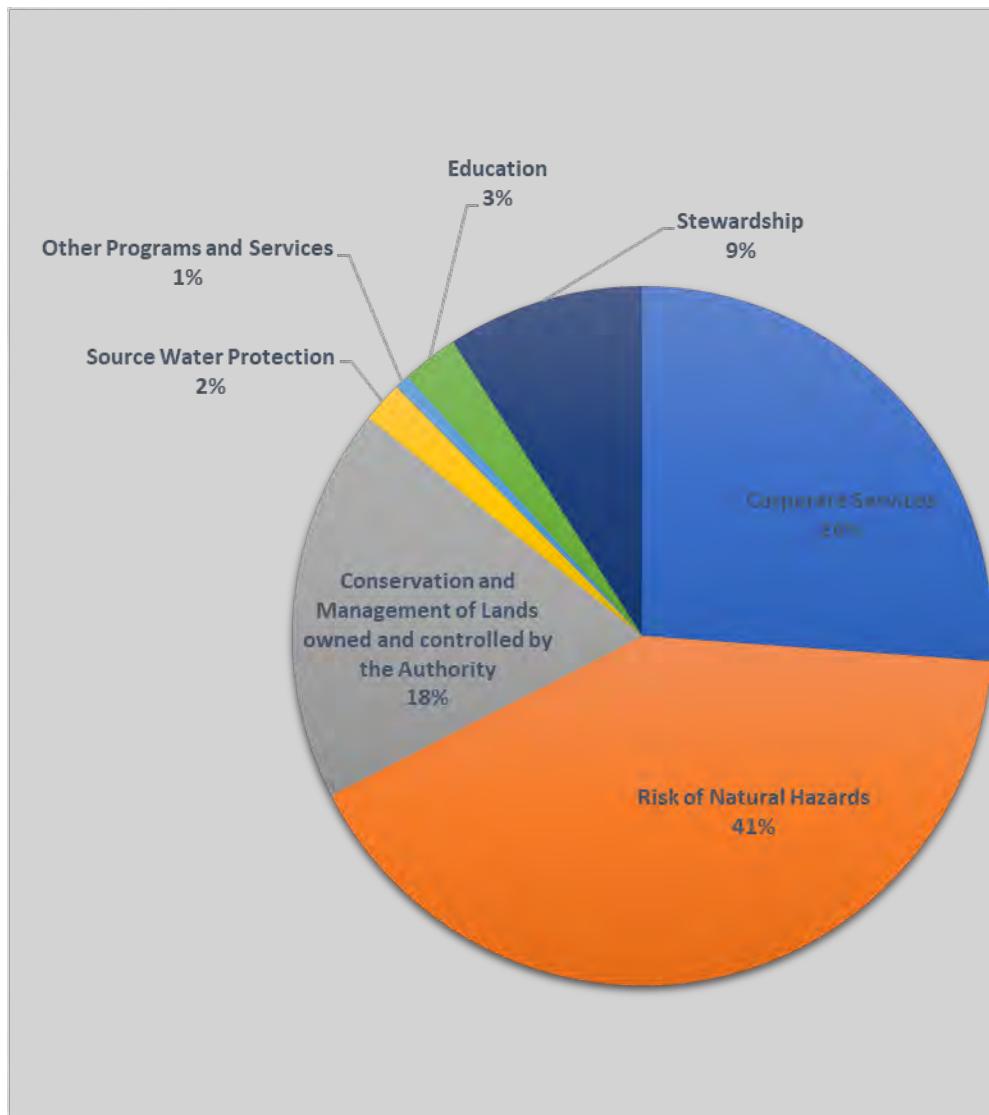
BUDGETED EXPENDITURES

The 2026 Budget is categorized into eight categories as listed below:

Projected Expenses by category include:

- 1) Corporate Services
- 2) Risk of Natural Hazards
- 3) Management, Operations and Maintenance of Authority Owned Lands
- 4) Drinking Water Source Protection
- 5) Other Programs and Services as described in Section 21.1(2) of the Act
- 6) Mapping Services
- 7) Education
- 8) Stewardship

FIGURE 2: 2026 PROJECTED EXPENSES BY PROGRAM



CORPORATE SERVICES

Corporate Services include programs that apply to all programs and services and the general overall management of the organization. In 2026, the Asset Management will be updated (5-year review).

ADMINISTRATION

Expenditures	\$718,551	
Annual	\$683,551	Travel and training (admin staff) Wages and benefits (admin staff) Insurance Professional fees, subscriptions, memberships Conservation Ontario levy Security monitoring Vehicle rental Board Member allowance (per diems, travel, meeting expenses) Audit fees Latornell Conference Legal fees Bank fees Computer equipment and software Photocopying Postage Stationery and office supplies Utilities Annual Report Telephone Northern Ontario Safety Group Health and Safety Training
One-Time	\$35,000	AMP Update
Revenue	\$718,551	
Grants	\$30,188	MNR Section 39
Self-Generated	\$326,502	Interest Revenue \$233,000, SWP Admin Fee \$9,500, Various Revenues \$5,850, Admin Fee for various projects \$78,152
Levy-All	\$208,900	
Reserve	\$30,000	
Prior Year Surplus	\$122,961	Previous Year Surplus

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community Relations applies to all programs and includes: promoting the Authority; media relations; signage; website; creation of publications (i.e., fact sheets, annual report, etc.) and other materials; and watershed-wide communication and promotion of LRCA and its programs to watershed residents, municipalities, and other agencies. Annually the LRCA produces a calendar, which is fully funded by paid advertising.

Expenditures	\$120,366	
Annual	\$120,366	Staff wages Vehicle rental Advertising Training Booth rentals Promotional items Website Calendar Expenses (\$6,000)
One-Time		
Revenue	\$120,366	
Grants		
Other	\$7,000	Other Revenue \$1,000, Calendar Revenue \$6,000
Levy-All	\$113,366	

VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT PROGRAM

The Vehicle and Equipment Program is utilized to internally charge LRCA programs vehicle related usage costs to self fund all vehicle and equipment costs, including replacement, in the form of a Reserve.

The following table illustrates the 2026 Vehicle and Equipment Program Budget for revenue and expenses, which shows the actual revenue and expenses for the previous three years. The projected surplus at the end of the financial year is to be transferred into the Replacement of Vehicle/Equipment Reserve.

Lakehead Region Conservation Authority 2026 Vehicle and Equipment Budget

	2026 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET
Revenue:		
Vehicle rental recoveries	50,000.00	44,570.00
Equipment rental recoveries	3,000.00	3,000.00
	53,000.00	47,570.00
Expenses:		
Insurance	4,500.00	5,000.00
Vehicles:		
Repairs and maintenance	8,000.00	7,000.00
Annual safety check	1,500.00	1,300.00
Licenses	-	-
Fuel	13,000.00	12,000.00
Equipment:		
Fuel	3,500.00	2,800.00
Repairs and maintenance	5,000.00	4,500.00
Small Tools	500.00	500.00
	36,000.00	33,100.00
Transfer to V/E Reserve	17,000.00	14,470.00

Reserve for Vehicle/Equipment Replacement

Budgeted Purchases from Reserves:

Riding Lawn Mower	6,500.00
Trimmer/Brushcutter (2)	1,400.00
Leaf Blower	1,200.00
Total	9,100.00

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

Information Technology Management is provided to all programs and services. It includes all hardware and software and is managed by the GIS/IT Specialist.

Expenditures	\$47,962	
Annual	\$47,962	Staff wages Accounting Software Adobe upgrades Bitdefender upgrade Office 365 upgrade Dalto Alto Cloud Backup Computer purchases Travel and training
One-Time		
Revenue	\$47,962	
Grants		
Other		
Self-Generated		
Levy-All	\$47,962	
Deferred		

CORPORATE GIS

Corporate GIS is provided to all programs and services. It includes the overall management of data and GIS software and is managed by GIS/IT Specialist.

Expenditures	\$25,595	
Annual	\$25,595	Staff wages Consulting Fees ESRI Software Hardware
One-Time		
Revenue	\$25,595	
Grants		
Other		
Self-Generated		
Levy-All	\$25,595	
Deferred		

3.1 CATEGORY 1: MANDATORY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Two summer students (Water Resources Technologist Assistants) will be hired in 2026 for 16-weeks. The Water Resources Technologist Assistants will assist the Planning and Regulations Technician and Environmental Planner with the following program areas:

- PGMN
- PWQMN
- Bathing Beach Sampling/Blue Green Algae Monitoring
- Sea Lamprey Trapping
- Mosquito and Pennock Creek Water Quality Monitoring
- Filing and data management.

3.1.1 RISK OF NATURAL HAZARDS

Mandatory Programs and Services related to the risk of natural hazards.

FLOODPLAIN MAPPING

The Regulatory Floodplain is the approved standard used in a particular watershed to define the limit of the flood plain for regulatory purposes. Adaptive watershed management requires a preventative and proactive approach to address the potential impacts of urbanization and climate change.

The Authority completed various floodplain mapping studies, which are currently used during the administration of the Regulations and for Plan Input and Review purposes. When the studies were completed, partial funding was provided under a variety of government funding programs. The studies were completed between 1979 and 1985, with McVicar Creek updated in 1995.

In recent years, utilizing National Disaster Mitigation Funding, updates to floodplain mapping studies were completed including:

- McIntyre River (2015),
- Neebing River (2018),
- McVicar Creek (2019),
- Kam River (2020),
- Pennock Creek, (2020),
- Mosquito Creek, (2020).

Completed studies are shared with applicable Member Municipalities for use by the engineering departments, for asset management and to be incorporated into their Official Plan and Zoning By-Law.

It is important for the recently updated Watershed hydraulic models to be updated regularly to reflect newly installed/modified infrastructure, such as culverts and bridges, and other changes that are proposed or permitted through the regulations process. Protocols for updating the hydraulic model are needed to ensure that updates are performed efficiently and on a regular schedule with clear communication between the LRCA, Municipality and the Consultant updating the models. A Consultant will be hired to complete updates to the models when required. Any changes to the watersheds allowed through the regulation process, or otherwise identified, will be tracked by LRCA and sent to the Consultant. As the anticipated updates will occur within the City of Thunder Bay, the costs will be part of a sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay.

Expenditures	\$32,526	
Annual	\$32,526	Maintenance of current models
One Time		
Revenue	\$32,526	
Grants		
Other		
Levy, Sole-Benefitting City of Thunder Bay	\$32,526	
Deferred		

TECHNICAL STUDIES

Studies, mapping and data collection to understand the risks related to natural hazards including how those risks might be affected by climate change. Development of plans and policies to support the delivery of programs.

In collaboration with Conservation Ontario, the LRCA is funded through Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) to complete a Lakehead Coastal Resilience Management Plan for the Lake Superior shoreline. The multi-year project will be completed between 2024 – 2027. The key priority of the project will be to understand current and future risks and develop adaptive short- and long-term actions that impacted municipalities can use to prepare for, respond to, and recover from the potential impacts of climate change. This will protect people and property as well reduce the economic impact of climate change impacts to municipal and private infrastructure. The expected products and outputs include:

1. Shoreline analysis to document current and future impacts due to climate change from flooding, erosion, wave uprush and extreme weather events;
2. Identify at risk infrastructure; assess value of impacted infrastructure;
3. Where applicable create a plan of retreat of community assets, housing or infrastructure away from hazards;

4. Create best management practices for mitigating and adapting to climate change;
5. Develop innovative solutions;
6. Develop short- and long-term solutions.

Expenditures	\$305,413	
Annual	\$4,288	Staff wages
One-time	\$301,125	Consulting Fees
Revenue	\$305,413	
Grants	\$240,903	NRCan
Levy-All	\$2,449	
Deferred	\$62,061	Risk of Natural Hazard deferred funds

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Promoting public awareness of natural hazards including flooding, drought and erosion including: public events and materials; social media services; website; and media relations.

Expenditures	\$19,190	
Annual	\$19,190	Staff wages Clothing Allowance
One-Time		
Revenue	\$19,190	
Grants		
Levy-All	\$19,190	
Deferred		

FLOOD FORECASTING AND WARNING

This includes procedures undertaken by the LRCA required to reduce this risk of loss of life and property damage due to flooding through the forecasting of flood events and the issuing of flood messaging (i.e., Watershed Conditions Statements, Flood Watch and Flood Warnings) to prepare those who must respond to the flood event. Additionally, this includes development and implementation of a comprehensive system developed to guide and implement Flood Forecasting and Warning activities, to effectively manage flood control structures and to provide guidance during the response to a flood.

Annual measures include:

- Operation and maintenance of stream flow gauges and precipitation gauges
- Snow surveys
- Spring Melt Meeting with Member Municipalities and applicable agencies
- Maintaining Flood Forecasting and Warning System Manual

- Monitor weather conditions 365 days per year
- Issuance of Flood Messaging as warranted
- Attend the annual Provincial Flood Forecasting Workshop
- Collect streamflow and precipitation data (partnership with Water Survey of Canada)
- Facilitate the CoCoRaHS program (volunteer-based precipitation monitoring program)
- Participate in Ontario Power Generation's Kaministiquia River Dam Safety Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
- Post flood event meetings and reports

Expenditures	\$79,142	
Annual	\$79,142	Staff wages Vehicle rental Materials and supplies Insurance Staff training (Flood Forecasting workshop, WISKI training) WISKI software annual maintenance fees Computer and office equipment, network repairs Boot Allowance Clothing Allowance
One-Time		
Revenue	\$79,142	
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$79,142	
Deferred		

DROUGHT AND LOW WATER RESPONSE

In conjunction with the MNR, the Authority administers the Ontario Low Water Response program within the LRCA area of jurisdiction, which is a response plan to minimize the effects of drought. The program includes condition monitoring and analysis and technical support to the Water Response Team representing major water users and decision makers who recommend drought response actions.

Expenditures	\$2,753	
Annual	\$2,753	Staff wages
		Materials and equipment
Revenue	\$2,753	
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$2,753	
Deferred		

INFRASTRUCTURE: NEEBING-MCINTYRE FLOODWAY

OPERATING

This category includes costs associated with the operation and minor maintenance of flood control structures, the primary purpose of which is to provide protection to life and property. This includes all costs related to the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway. Overall, flood control services provide watershed residents with an effective and efficient system that will reduce their exposure to the threat of flood damages and loss of life.

Expenditures	\$235,634	
Annual	\$235,634	Annual structural inspections of Neebing Weir and Diversion Structure Floodway water level monitoring Minor maintenance (tree removal, minor repairs, etc.) Hiring of two summer students (16 weeks) to complete Floodway maintenance Staff wages Vehicle rental Materials and supplies Insurance Administration Fee Property Taxes
One-Time		
Revenue	\$235,634	
Grants	\$68,681	Section 39 funding
Other		
Self-Generated	\$500	CLE Land Rental
Levy, Sole-Benefiting City of Thunder Bay	\$166,453	
Deferred		

CAPITAL

This category includes costs associated with the capital and major maintenance of flood control structures, the primary purpose of which is to provide protection to life and property. This includes all costs related to the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway. Overall, flood control services provide watershed residents with an effective and efficient system that will reduce their exposure to the threat of flood damages and loss of life.

The Floodway has provided 41 years of continuous operation since completion in 1984. In 2023, a consultant was hired to update the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway Integrity Study, which is updated every 10 years. The study provided a comprehensive review of the original design assumptions versus the actual observed and predicted performance. The schedule of long-range maintenance will be reviewed as part of the study and will be used to confirm future required funds to maintain the integrity of the Floodway. The data was used to update Asset Management Plan and Operational Plan which were mandated to be completed by December 31, 2024.

Expenditures	\$534,713	
Annual	\$534,713	Annual Levy to deferred for future use
One Time		
Revenue	\$534,713	
Grants		
Deferred		
Levy, Sole-Benefiting City of Thunder Bay	\$534,713	A constant amount is levied annually, with funds not needed in the given year placed in a deferred fund for future years in order to avoid the highs and lows when major maintenance is required. LRCA staff maintains a timeline for major maintenance required on the Floodway, which is used to calculate required future funds needed in order to provide a consistent and manageable annual levy to the City of Thunder Bay. As the Floodway is an essential part of mitigating the risk to life and property, the LRCA must guarantee funds are available to ensure the integrity of the Floodway is maintained.

Some of the larger (over \$100,000) major maintenance anticipated to be required in the next 10 years include (based on 2023 Integrity Study):

- 2027 Floodway Channel Dredging – Island Drive to CPR Bridge (\$2,000,000)

- 2028 Balmoral Sediment Trap Dredging (\$900,000)
- 2029 Diversion Channel Lip Dredging (\$450,000)
- 2031 Floodway Channel Dredging – Island Drive to Lake Superior (\$1,500,000)

Major maintenance projects are eligible for Provincial Transfer Payment Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECl) funding which the LRCA applies for the year the work is undertaken; however, the allocation of WECl funds varies year-to-year and is not guaranteed year-to-year; therefore, total costs of major maintenance are used in determining required future funds. Any additional funding obtained through WECl will result in the levy being carried forward for future year's projects and adjusting the long-term projections accordingly.

INFRASTRUCTURE: VICTOR STREET EROSION
OPERATING

This category includes costs associated with the minor maintenance of erosion control structures on City of Thunder Bay owned land on Victor Street and protection of City owned infrastructure along Kam riverbank. The primary purpose of which is to provide protection to life and property. Overall, erosion control services reduce watershed resident's exposure to the threat of property damages and loss of life. This area has historically been managed/monitored on behalf of the City of Thunder Bay.

Expenditures	\$22,233	
Annual	\$22,233	Slope inspection (2x/year)
		Staff wages
One-Time		
Revenue	\$22,233	
Grants		
Self-Generated		
Levy, Sole-Benefiting City of Thunder Bay	\$22,233	
Levy-All		
Deferred		

CAPITAL

This category includes costs associated with the capital and major maintenance of erosion on City of Thunder Bay owned land on Victor Street, the primary purpose of which is to provide protection to life and property. Overall, erosion control services reduce watershed resident's exposure to the threat of property damages and loss of life. The main erosion control structure is the soil nailing completed along Victor Street on City of Thunder Bay land to protect Victor Street and the adjacent infrastructure.

In 2019 the Kaministiquia River Erosion Sites Inventory Report was completed which delineated the 100-year erosion rate along the Kaministiquia River within the City of Thunder Bay. Within the report, it was identified that Victor Street was within the 100-year erosion hazard, based on the completed methodology. A detailed analysis of the area was recommended to look at the risk to Victor Street and adjacent infrastructure, including long-term recommendations related to access and egress to the area. This study was completed in 2020; recommendations will be incorporated into future budgets in consultation with City of Thunder Bay Engineering.

Expenditures	\$37,755	
Annual	\$37,755	Amount to be deferred for future use.
One Time		
Revenue	\$46,105	
Grants	\$12,500	MNR Section 39
Levy, Sole-Benefiting City of Thunder Bay	\$25,255	
Levy-All		
Deferred		

REVIEW OF PROPOSALS UNDER AN ACT

As a mandatory program, staff will provide input to the review and approval processes under other applicable law (i.e., *Aggregate Resources Act*, *Drainage Act*, *Environmental Assessment Act*, etc.) with comments related to natural hazards, wetlands, watercourses and Section 28 permit requirements.

Expenditures	\$2,321	
Annual	\$2,321	Staff wages
Revenue		
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$2,321	
Deferred		

PLAN REVIEW COMMENTS

Conservation Authorities are delegated the responsibility from MNR to comment on all *Planning Act* applications processed by their Member Municipalities as to the applications adherence to Section 5.2 of the Provincial Planning Statement (i.e., natural hazards).

This category includes reviewing comprehensive updates to Member Municipality Official Plans and Zoning By-laws; site specific amendments to Official Plans and Zoning By-laws; subdivision applications; site plan control; consent applications; minor variances, etc. Comprehensive Official Plan and Zoning By-Law reviews are eligible for Section 39 Transfer Payment; however, due to the province under funding core mandate programming, no transfer payment is allocated for this mandated review.

Effective January 1, 2021, the LRCA began charging a Fee for Service for all Plan Review comments. The generated revenue will be used to reduce levy required to administer this delegated program. A few years of revenue will be required to fully predict future years generated revenue, which will fluctuate annually depending on the volume of *Planning Act* applications received by our Member Municipalities.

Effective January 1, 2023, a Minister's Direction as part of the *More Homes Built Faster Act* 2022 (Bill 23) was issued to Conservation Authorities to not change fees related to reviewing and commenting on planning applications for the period of January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023; therefore, fees charged to applicants for planning comments were not changed through the legislated period. The fee freeze was continued in 2024 and 2025. It is unknown whether or not the freezing of fees will be extended into 2026.

Expenditures	\$90,771	
Annual	\$90,771	Staff wages
		Training
		Legal Fees
One time		
Revenue	\$90,771	
Other	\$24,300	Canada Summer Jobs \$9,300, Planning Fees Revenue \$15,000
Levy-All	\$46,471	
Deferred	\$20,000	

***ADMINISTERING AND ENFORCING THE ACT (SECTION 28
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS)***

The Development Regulations category includes the costs and revenues associated with administering Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, which includes: permit application review, inspections, permit issuance, enforcement and follow-up. Also, which may include defending appeals and conducting Hearings.

Effective January 1, 2023, a Minister's Direction as part of the *More Homes Built Faster Act* 2022 (Bill 23) was issued to Conservation Authorities to not change fees related to permits issued by Conservation Authorities for the period of January 1, 2023, to December 23, 2023; therefore, fees charged to applicants for development permits were not changed through the legislated period. This freeze was extended in 2024 and 2025. It is unknown whether or not the freezing of fees will be extended into 2026.

Expenditures	\$209,611	
Annual	\$209,611	Staff wages Training and travel Legal Fees Engineering Support Provincial Offences Officer supplies Professional Fees
One-Time		
Revenue	\$209,611	
Self-Generated	\$25,000	Lawyer property inquiries \$4,000, Development Regulation Permit fees \$21,000
Levy-All	\$184,611	
Other		
Deferred		

**3.1.2 CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF LANDS OWNED AND
CONTROLLED BY THE LRCA**

Programs and services related to the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority.

CONSERVATION AREAS

OPERATING

This includes all expenses and revenue associated operation, and minor maintenance of land owned and/or managed by the Authority. In total, the LRCA owns 2,603 hectares of land, including Conservation Areas, administrative office lands, and management lands.

The Conservation Areas provide an opportunity for the watershed residents for semi-passive activities such as hiking, nature appreciation, photography, fishing, etc. Of the eight Conservation Areas, five provide access to Lake Superior with three being adjacent to Provincially Significant wetlands. Comments on planning applications near Conservation Areas will be provided by the LRCA.

The Bathing Beach monitoring program will continue at Hazelwood Lake and Mission Island Marsh Conservation Areas, which monitors *E. coli* levels in conjunction with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Additionally, cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) monitoring will continue at Hazelwood, Mission, Silver Harbour and Hurkett Conservation Areas. Continued testing will solidify LRCA's understanding of cyanobacteria within selected Conservation Areas, while protecting visitors and their pets from Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS). Further, the study will contribute to a greater understanding of how cyanobacteria are influencing the Lakehead Watershed. Continued testing will involve the use of Eurofin's Algal Toxin (Microsystins) Test Strip Kit for Recreational Water and continued Microscopy Work provided by Blue-Green Labs.

In 2024, staff completed the mandatory Conservation Lands Strategy and Land Inventory (due December 31, 2024).

In 2021, pay stations were added to Mission Marsh and Cascades Conservation Areas, and in 2023 a pay station was added at Silver Harbour Conservation Area, in an effort to increase generated revenue. The pay stations at Mission Marsh and Cascades Conservation Areas have resulted in a significant increase in revenue at the respective Conservation Areas. This increase in revenue is anticipated to continue in the years ahead and will be used to off-set required levy to operate the areas and enhance amenities at the area.

In 2025, a consultant was hired to design new wayfinding signage for the Conservation Areas. Signage will be updated per the updated designs as the budget permits. Staff will look for external funding to offset costs with the signage replacement, which may enable more signs to be completed in 2026. Once the designs are completed and the number of signs in each area are established, a long-term plan for the eventual replacement of all signs will be completed.

A consultant will be hired to design an “Urban Conservation Area” to be located at the LRCA Administrative office. This new area will provide amenities for use by staff, staff hosting events, the public, etc. The area will provide a Conservation Area that is accessible by walking and/or public transit as all other areas need to be accessed by a vehicle. Once a plan is designed, external funding can be sought to assist in the construction of the site. The goal is to add features such as a pavilion, AODA trail system through the adjacent wetland and an outdoor classroom area.

Expenditures	\$387,088	
Annual	\$335,088	Staff wages Clothing allowance On-going maintenance Garbage removal Sanding/salting of parking areas Outhouse rentals Property Taxes Credit Card usage fees
One-Time	\$22,000 \$30,000	Wayfinding Sign Installation Design of Urban Conservation Area
Transfer to Reserve		
Revenue	\$357,088	
Other	\$20,000	TD Friends of the Environment, Enbridge
Levy-All	\$242,088	
Self-Generated	\$95,000	Explorer Cards, Pay-Station, Coin Box Revenue
Deferred	\$30,000	Design of Urban Conservation Area

CAPITAL

The capital fund is used for major maintenance and capital investment at the Conservation Areas. In 2021, KGS Group updated the LRCA’s Asset Management Plan (AMP), which assessed the current condition, annual maintenance and major repairs required to the Authority’s assets. LRCA staff have analyzed the AMP and prepared a long-term schedule of capital repairs, which has been used to provide a consistent and manageable annual levy. It was identified in the AMP that there are some major repairs required to ensure the integrity and safety at our Conservation Areas. In addition, other major capital requirements were identified to be completed in the near future to avoid conditions deteriorating. The Conservation Area AMP will be updated in 2026 as part of the overall AMP update.

Annually, \$20,000 is placed in the Hazelwood Dam Reserve to prepare to fund future maintenance of that structure.

Repairs planned include:

- Replace two concrete vault toilets with one at the Hazelwood beach area.
- Repairs to the privy at Mission Island
- Repairs to asphalt cracks in the trail and parking lot and paint lines at Mission Island
- Decommission old parking lot at Mills Block

Expenditures	\$135,300	
Annual	\$20,000	Appropriation to Hazelwood Lake Dam Reserve (\$20,000)
One-Time	\$115,300	Replacement of outhouse at Hazelwood beach area, Repair outdoor Privy Mission, Parking lot repairs Mission, Decommission old parking lot at Mills Block.
Other		
Revenue	\$135,300	
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$83,000	
Reserve	\$52,300	

ADMINISTER SECTION 29 REGULATIONS IN CONSERVATION AREAS

Enforcement and compliance in Conservation Areas, related to Conservation Areas Regulations and Parking by-law enforcement in the City of Thunder Bay and Conservation Area Regulation enforcement in Conservation Areas. APEX will be used to increase enforcement at Cascades and Mission Island Marsh after hours and on weekends.

Expenditures	\$8,681	
Annual	\$8,681	Staff wages Enforcement Supplies Apex after hours and weekend enforcement
One-Time		
Revenue	\$8,861	
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$8,861	
Self-Generated		
Deferred		

OTHER OWNED LAND

Operation and minor maintenance in other Conservation Authority owned land (i.e., forest management property, floodplain lands, Hope and Memory Garden, etc.). In 2024, staff completed the mandatory Land Inventory (due December 31, 2024).

The Authority owns and maintains one Forest Management property (William's Forest) and has Forest Management Plans on 10 property holdings, which guide the management of the areas as well as reduce property taxes through the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) administered by MNR. In 2026, the 10-year update of the Forest Management Plans will be completed.

The Forest Management Reserve is used for activities related to the forest management properties, including maintaining Forest Management Plans and for promoting greening activities. The Reserve is maintained from previous year's revenue for future purchases of forest management properties and forest management related expenditures.

In 2026, some harvesting may be undertaken at Wishart Conservation Area subject to contractor availability and market conditions.

Expenditures	\$73,979	
Annual	\$63,979	Wages Property taxes, Office Building maintenance, other land maintenance Routine Maintenance
One-Time	\$10,000	10-year update of Forest Management Plans
Revenue	\$73,979	
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$41,647	
Self-Generated	\$5,256	
Reserve	\$27,076	

OFFICE CAPITAL AND OPERATING

This fund is used for long-term capital repairs of the LRCA Administration Facility. In 2021, the Authority updated the Asset Management Plan (AMP) that provides guidance on the long-term maintenance and major capital repairs to maintain the integrity and safety of the building. The AMP was used to plan upgrades and repairs over the next five years. As a result, LRCA staff have completed a long-term plan for the timing of significant repairs, which is used to provide a consistent and manageable annual levy. This levy does not include any additional capital plans; it is only to maintain the building in its current condition. The AMP will be updated in 2026.

Expenditures	\$89,324	
Annual	\$ 10,000	Maintenance of grounds, buildings and equipment
		Emergency repairs as needed
One-Time	\$11,000	Office plumbing repair and storage units in garage.
Deferred	68,324	Deferred for future capital work
Revenue	\$89,324	
Other		
Grants		
Levy-All	\$89,324	
Reserve		

3.1.3 SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

This category refers to programs and services related to the Authority's duties, functions and responsibilities as a Source Protection Authority under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

The Source Water Protection program commenced in 2005 with 100% funding provided from the MECP with the goal of completion of Source Protection Plans for municipal drinking water systems. Within the Lakehead Watershed, there are only two municipal drinking water systems: City of Thunder Bay Bare Point Water Treatment Plant and the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge Rosslyn Village Drinking Water System.

The Lakehead Source Protection Plan was approved on January 16, 2013, with an effective date of October 1, 2013. The Source Protection Plan contains a series of policies developed by the Source Protection Committee in consultation with the local community to protect municipal drinking water sources from existing and future drinking water threats. The Plan describes the actions that must be taken by various implanting bodies to protect surface water and groundwater sources that supply municipal drinking water.

The affected municipalities are responsible to implement the Source Protection Plans and must adhere to the policies including providing annual reports to the Source Protection Authority (i.e., LRCA Board). The Source Protection Authority is then required to assess the municipal annual reports and report annually to the MECP.

The current Agreement provides funding for three years between the LRCA and MECP will expire on March 31, 2027. It provides \$226,007.48 over the period, which funds administration and 0.55 FTE salary and benefits for years 1 and 2 and 0.5 FTE for year 3. The Source Protection Authority (i.e., LRCA Board) is responsible for maintenance of the Source Protection Committee, submission of Annual Reports to MECP, maintenance and retention of data and files (i.e., 15-year retention requirement) related to this program,

which began in 2005. There is an expectation by MECP that each Source Protection Authority maintain qualified staff to ensure that the Plan remains current.

If funding is not provided in the future, the cost of the program would be a sole-benefitting levy applicable to the City of Thunder Bay and Oliver Paipoonge.

Expenditures	\$72,652	
Annual	\$72,652	Staff wages (0.20 FTE Watershed Manager, 0.15 FTE GIS/IT Specialist, 0.1 FTE Administrative Assistant, 0.05 FTE Communications Manager)
		Travel and per diem expenses to attend Chair's meetings
		Source Protection Committee (member per diems, room rental, agenda costs)
		Administration Fee
One-Time		
Revenue	\$72,652	
Grants	\$72,652	MECP Transfer Payment
Other		
Levy-All		
Deferred		

3.1.4 OTHER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

PROVINCIAL GROUNDWATER MONITORING NETWORK (PGMN)

The Authority in partnership with the MECP participates in the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Program (PGMN) in which LRCA monitors eight groundwater monitoring wells. LRCA staff collect samples and submit them to the MECP laboratory for analysis. Laboratory costs and sample shipping costs are paid by the MECP. The data not only provides data for the LRCA area of jurisdiction, but it is also the only sampling completed in northern Ontario.

Expenditures	\$16,507	
Annual	\$16,507	Vehicle rental
		Wages
		Materials and equipment
One-Time		
Revenue	\$16,507	
Grants		
Other		

Levy-All	\$16,507	
Deferred		

PROVINCIAL WATER QUALITY MONITORING NETWORK (PWQMN)

The Authority in partnership with the MECP participates in the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) program, in which LRCA monitors six surface water locations. LRCA staff collect samples and submit them to the MECP laboratory for analysis. Laboratory costs and sample shipping costs are paid by the MECP. The data not only provides data for the LRCA area of jurisdiction, but it is also the only sampling completed in northern Ontario.

Expenditures	\$9,430	
Annual	\$9,430	Vehicle rental Wages Materials and equipment
One-Time		
Revenue	\$9,430	
Grants		
Other		
Levy-All	\$9,430	
Deferred		

3.2 CATEGORY 2: NON-MANDATORY PROGRAMS AT THE REQUEST OF A MUNICIPALITY

MAPPING SERVICE

The LRCA offers for a fee, a mapping service to our Member Municipalities who choose to participate. LRCA staff maintain the hardware and software required to provide a web-based mapping service that provides mapping capabilities to its users. Additionally, maps are created and updated, by request for a Member Municipality (i.e., Official Plan/Zoning By-Law Comprehensive Updates, etc.). Revenue from this service is used to maintain equipment and supplies related to GIS. The service will continue to be provided, subject to executed Memorandums of Understanding.

Expenditures	\$13,397	
Annual	\$13,397	Staff Wages Portion of ESRI License Plotter and computer expense
One-Time		
Revenue	\$13,397	
Grants		
Other	\$16,000	Oliver Paipoonge \$12,350, Dorion \$650, Lakehead Rural Planning Board \$3,000
Deferred	(\$2,603)	Surplus to Deferred

MOSQUITO AND PENNOCK CREEK MONITORING

At the request of the City of Thunder Bay Engineering and Operations Division, LRCA staff are completing surface water sampling along Mosquito Creek (10 sites) and Pennock Creek (2 sites) within the City of Thunder Bay once per month, from June through October. The City of Thunder Bay is interested in tracking water quality within Mosquito Creek and Pennock Creek watersheds within the City. Mosquito Creek and Pennock Creek are both watersheds where residents are serviced by municipal water and private septic systems. A Watershed Assessment for Mosquito Creek was last completed in 2022. Since that time, the City has used LRCA's resources and expertise to continue to collect surface water samples for water quality analysis to continue to track exceedances specifically related to nutrients (nitrates, nitrites, phosphorus) within the watershed. The Category 2 program is funded through direct billing to the City of Thunder Bay Engineering and Operations Division and does not use municipal levy.

Expenditures	\$7,705	
Annual	\$7,705	Staff Wages Vehicle and Equipment
One-Time		
Revenue	\$7,705	
Grants		
Other	\$7,705	
Deferred		

3.3 CATEGORY 3: NON-MANDATORY PROGRAMS

3.3.1 EDUCATION

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The Environmental Education program provides curriculum-based educational presentations and field trips to Conservation Areas and within school classrooms. The non-mandatory (i.e., not related to the risk of natural hazards) education program is operated with 100% other funding (no levy). The program covers a wide array of topics including watersheds, various natural heritage, and natural science topics such as birds, trees, aquatics invertebrates, and other topics, many of which are tied directly to Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum expectations. As a private landowner, the LRCA is uniquely positioned to provide meaningful, impactful outdoor education programming utilizing Conservation Areas as “living classrooms”. Watershed stewardship best practices and fostering a sense of wonder and appreciation for the natural world is the goal of the education program, as the best way to inspire people to care about the natural world and the environment is to give them meaningful educational and recreational experiences.

Expenditures	\$58,398	
Annual	\$58,398	Education Coordinator position (39 weeks) Vehicle rental Educational expenses (guest speakers, supplies, safety items, etc.)
One-Time		
Revenue	\$58,398	
Grants	\$6,200	
Self-Generated	\$27,198	Various fundraising (\$10,000), School Program Fees (\$10,198), Living Classroom Donations (\$2,000), Catholic School Board Program (\$5,000)
Levy-All		
Deferred	\$25,000	

NATURE INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING

Nature Interpretive Programming is programming developed for execution on LRCA-owned land. Programs and events with nature interpretive programming components within Conservation Areas vary year to year; however, the Dorion Bird Festival is held annually at Hurkett Cove Conservation Area. Nature interpretive programming also includes Watershed Explorer programs (typically funded by the TD Friends of the Environment Fund), guided hikes, workshops, and other non-school-based interpretive

programming. Grant revenue is estimated based on previous years applications. Deferred funds will be used in the event external funding is not obtained.

Expenditures	\$41,151	
Annual	\$41,151	Staff Wages Fall Mushroom Hike Fall Migratory Birding Day (formerly Waterfowl Viewing Day) Silver Harbour Day TD Programming Dorion Bird Festival
One-Time		
Revenue	\$41,151	
Grants	\$32,900	TD Friends of the Environment, (\$14,000), OPG (\$13,000), Enbridge (\$5,900)
Self-Generated	\$19,000	Dorion Bird Festival Ticket Sales, OPG Donation
Levy-All		
Deferred	\$(10,749)	Surplus to Deferred

3.3.2 STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is the planning, promotion, and implementation of management practices that contribute to restoration and protection of our natural resources. LRCA's Stewardship Program aims to promote and encourage stewardship within the Lakehead Watershed. Programs enable private landowners to restore riparian and shoreline area on their property; plant trees on private land; and facilitate stewardship projects on LRCA/municipally owned lands to restore and create wildlife habitat. Examples of on-the-ground projects include invasive species removal, wetland creation, meadow habitat enhancement, and shoreline stabilization. LRCA's Stewardship Program engages over 300 volunteers annually in these activities. Projects vary year to year depending on funding and need in the watershed. Stewardship projects are funded from various provincial, federal, and private funding sources. No levy is used for the Stewardship Program.

SUPERIOR STEWARDS PROGRAM

The four-year funding agreement with the MNR for the LRCA's Shoreline Protection Program ended in December 2024; however, in 2025, the LRCA successfully received an additional \$40,000 towards a fifth year of the program, carried out in fall 2025. The program focuses on rehabilitating shoreline and riparian zones on private property within

the Thunder Bay Area of Concern. The Thunder Bay Area of Concern is a 100-metre buffer along the Lake Superior coast and up Thunder Bay's five main tributaries, defined by ECCC as having experienced significant environmental degradation. The program provides landowners with a shoreline assessment, educational materials, individualized planting plans, up to 100 native plants, and planting implementation support.

Planting native vegetation enhances shoreline and riparian zones, rehabilitates, and maintains healthy shoreline habitat, provides erosion protection, and improves water quality. The objective of the Superior Stewards program is to raise landowner awareness of riparian and shoreline stewardship principles and implement restoration and naturalization through on-the-ground projects. The restoration projects range from terrestrial/aquatic plantings, invasive plant species removal, green infrastructure techniques, species-at-risk habitat enhancement/protection, general habitat enhancement, and/or pollinator habitat creation.

In 2026, additional sources of funding will be sought to continue offering this service to Lakehead Watershed residents. A fee-for-service model will also be explored.

Expenditures	\$40,000	
Annual	\$40,000	Wages and Benefits
One-Time		
Revenue	\$40,000	
Grants	\$40,000	Provincial funding MNR Shoreline Protection
Self-Generated		
Levy-All		
Deferred		

TREE SEEDLING PROGRAM

In partnership with Hill's Greenhouse, the LRCA administers a Tree Seedling Program, which provides the opportunity for the public to purchase locally grown tree seedlings to plant in the watershed. As of 2025, over 181,250 trees have been accessed through the program. Wages for this program are funded by past generated revenue from harvesting on LRCA owned land. This program's goal is to achieve a no net loss of trees in the overall watershed by providing trees to plant to the public to offset any harvesting on LRCA owned land.

In 2024 and 2025, all tree seedling revenue went towards LRCA's Environmental Education Programming at the request of Hill's Greenhouse, who generously donated 9,900 trees. In 2026, the trees will be purchased from the greenhouse.

Expenditures	\$11,720	
Annual	\$11,720	Staff wages Purchase Tree Seedlings
Revenue	\$11,720	
Grants		
Self-Generated	\$6,000	Tree Seedling Sales
Levy-All		
Reserve	\$5,720	Forest Management Reserve

PRIVATE LAND STEWARDSHIP

To promote and practice stewardship on LRCA and municipally owned lands, staff apply for funding for a variety of projects annually. Other funding applications will be submitted throughout the year as they become available. The following restoration projects are planned in 2026:

- The Floodway Habitat Corridor will be continued in 2026, with the vision of restoring a five-kilometre stretch of riparian habitat on LRCA owned lands along the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway corridor. The project aims to enhance riparian habitat by planting native vegetation and managing invasive species through volunteer clean-up and planting events. Funding is provided by ECCC Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative in 2026.
- The Indigenous Community Garden, funded by ECCC EcoAction, will be designed and installed with the support of the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre, Fort William First Nation, City of Thunder Bay Department of Indigenous Affairs, local Indigenous artists and Indigenous Elders. The garden will neighbour the Hope and Memory Garden and will restore riparian habitat while fostering relationships.
- Funded by the Invasive Species Centre, the Thunder Bay Regional Phragmites Collaboration is coordinated by LRCA and is composed of 35 stakeholders and groups with the shared vision of a “phrag-free” landscape by 2033. The intent of the Collaborative is to engage interested community groups in the status of Invasive Phragmites in the region, develop an integrated long-term plan for its management, and collaborate on its removal.
- In partnership with Parks Canada Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area, LRCA will work to gain a better understanding of the extent and potential impacts of Narrowleaf Cattail at Hurkett Cove Conservation Area. The two-year

project will result in the development of a management strategy, with the aim of reducing the spread of invasive cattails, impacts on Wild Rice, and subsequent loss of biodiversity at the site. Recommendations will be put forward to project partners in the spring of 2026, with a three-year continuation of the project proposed.

- Pending successful funding from MECP, restoration maintenance of sites rehabilitated as part of the Thunder Bay Habitat Strategy over the past 3 years will be carried out in 2026. This will include invasive species management and additional plantings of native species where applicable at Fisherman's Park West, Boulevard Wetland, and along the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway.
- Subject to confirmed funding from MECP, an Administrative Controls Protocol for the Northern Wood Preservers Inc. site will be developed with partner agencies to avoid disturbances to naturally recovering contaminated sediments from future developments.

Expenditures	\$235,550	
Annual	\$235,550	Staff Wages \$130,500 Materials \$93,050 Administration Fees \$12,000
One-Time		
Revenue	\$275,550	
Grants	\$8,500	MECP NWP Admin Controls Protocol
	\$49,550	ECCC Eco Action Indigenous Community Garden
	\$77,500	ECCC GFLEI Floodway Habitat Corridor
	\$30,000	MECP Restoration Maintenance of Current Sites
	\$30,000	Parks Canada
	\$40,000	ISC Phragmites
Levy-All		
Deferred		

SEEDS FOR CONSERVATION

The Seeds for Conservation program offers native perennials grown from seed sustainably harvested by staff from LRCA Conservation Areas. The plants are grown in the LRCA Greenhouse by the Watershed Stewardship Technician, supported by a Stewardship seasonal staff person. With insufficient access to Northwestern Ontario native species through local nurseries, LRCA's Seeds for Conservation program provides regionally adapted seed and plants for habitat restoration projects, pollinator gardens, rain gardens, and more. It is used by LRCA and community partners such as Fort William First Nation, Ontario Native Women's Association, the City of Thunder Bay, EcoSuperior, Lakehead University and Confederation College. In-person native plant sales and sales through the LRCA webstore have generated additional revenue for this program. In 2026, this initiative will enter into its third year, offering a great support to the growing stewardship program.

Expenditures	\$45,000	
Annual	\$45,000	Staff wages, supplies
One-Time		
Revenue	\$45,000	
Grants		
Self-Generated	\$45,000	Plant sales (sales to public and private land stewardship projects)

SEA LAMPREY

A contract is executed annually between the LRCA and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) for Sea Lamprey Barrier Surveillance, Monitoring and Grounds keeping on the Wolf River. LRCA staff conduct five inspections annually and complete a Barrier Inspection/Maintenance Report.

A contract is executed annually between the LRCA and DFO for Sea Lamprey trapping on the Neebing and McIntyre Rivers. Five days per week for eight to twelve weeks, sea lamprey traps are emptied to conduct mark and release studies, collect biological data, environmental data and complete daily reports to provide data to DFO in order for population estimates to be undertaken. These estimates are used along with that of other streams to estimate the population in all of Lake Superior. The program is conducted on the permanent trap located on the Neebing River on LRCA land and at Lakehead University on the McIntyre River.

Expenditures	\$13,728	
Annual	\$13,728	Staff wages Vehicle rental
One-Time		
Revenue		
Contracts	\$1,886	DFO Wolf River Inspections
	\$11,842	DFO Neebing and McIntyre River trapping
Levy-All		
Deferred		

4 RESERVE APPROPRIATIONS

The Authority's Reserve Policy sets goals for the Board Designated Reserves and the terms and conditions for their use. As outlined in the Policy, planned appropriations to and from reserves will be outlined in the Budget Document annually, and will be approved through the budget approval process.

Unplanned appropriations to and from reserves throughout the year will require Board approval, unless they meet the terms outlined in the Reserve Policy.

Reserve shortfalls from the determined "Target Reserve Level" as outlined in the Policy will be outlined in the Budget Document, and if warranted, appropriations to a reserve will be proposed to achieve the Target Reserve Level.

4.1 PERCENTAGE OF TARGET RESERVE LIMIT REACHED

The Reserve Policy indicates that if any reserve category is less than 50% of the targeted reserve, the Board of Directors, in the absence of any extraordinary circumstances, should consider adopting an annual budget that includes a projected surplus sufficient to rebuild the reserve category over a defined period to its targeted reserve level.

Reserve	Reserve Level as of December 31, 2024	Reserve Limit	Target Reserve Level	% of Target Reserve Level
Operating Capital	\$1,459,479	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000	133
Administrative Facility - Maintenance	\$280,651		Adequate funds available to complete annual regular maintenance, emergency repairs and major maintenance per the AMP	
Administrative Facility - New Facility	\$32,310		Adequate funds available to construct a new Administration Facility (previous donations)	
Vehicle and Equipment	\$73,081	\$150,000	Adequate funds available to purchase required vehicles and equipment	49
Insurance Deductible	\$32,145		\$30,000	108
Legal Fees	\$120,402		\$100,000	107
Conservation Area Major Maintenance Capital	\$353,465		As forecasted in Asset Management Plan	
Hazelwood Lake Dam	\$80,000		\$250,000	32
Forest Management	\$127,529			
Land Acquisition	\$248,500			

4.2 2026 PLANNED APPROPRIATIONS TO AND FROM RESERVES

Reserve	Appropriations to Reserve	Appropriations from Reserves
Operating Capital		\$30,000
Administrative Facility - Maintenance		
Administrative Facility - New Facility		
Vehicle and Equipment	\$7,900	\$9,100
Insurance Deductible		
Legal Fees		
Conservation Area Major Maintenance Capital		\$52,300
Hazelwood Lake Dam	\$20,000	
Forest Management		\$32,796
Land Acquisition		

5 CONCLUSION

The 2026 Budget document details the LRCA's capital and operating plans for the upcoming year. It is the opinion of staff that the current budget is reflective of the Authority's short-term goals and the long-term requirements.

The Draft Budget document provides the details of the budget. The Budget Summary will be used in the consultation with Member Municipalities and will be posted on the LRCA website as required in O. Reg. 402/22. The Final Budget will be brought to the Board in November for final approval.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggested Resolution

“THAT: the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority approves the 2026 Draft Budget, Version 1.0, dated August 27, 2025, for consultation purposes. “

APPENDIX A:

2026 BUDGET SUMMARY

Figure 3: 2026 Budget Summary

Lakehead Region Conservation Authority 2026 Draft Budget Version 1.0												
Program	Annual Cost								Total Cost 2024			
	Source of Funding											
	Levy-All	Sole-Benefiting Levy City of Thunder Bay	Provincial Funding	Federal Funding	Other Donations and Other	Grants	Self Generated	Surplus/ Deferred				
Category 1 Mandatory Programs and Services												
Corporate Services												
Administration	208,900	-	30,188	-	-	-	326,502	122,961	30,000	718,551		
Community Relations	113,366	-	-	-	-	-	7,000	-	-	120,366		
Vehicle and Equipment Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	53,000	-	(7,900)	45,100		
IT	47,962	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47,962		
Corporate GIS	25,595	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,595		
	395,823	-	30,188	-	-	-	386,502	122,961	22,100	957,574		
Risk of Natural Hazards												
Flood Plain Mapping	-	32,526	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32,526		
Technical Studies	2,449	-	-	240,903	-	-	-	62,061	-	305,413		
Communications and Outreach	19,190	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19,190		
Flood Forecasting and Warning	39,571	-	39,571	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,142		
Drought and Low Water Response	2,753	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,753		
Infrastructure: Neebing-McIntyre Floodway	-	701,166	68,681	-	-	-	500	-	-	770,347		
Infrastructure: Victor Street Erosion	-	47,488	12,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	59,988		
Review of Proposals under Act	2,321	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,321		
Plan Review Comments	46,471	-	-	9,300	-	-	15,000	20,000	-	90,771		
Administering and Enforcing the Act (Section 28)	184,611	-	-	-	-	-	25,000	-	-	209,611		
	297,366	-	781,180	120,752	250,203	-	-	40,500	82,061	-	1,572,062	
Conservation and Management of Lands owned and controlled by the Authority												
Conservation Areas	242,088	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	95,000	30,000	-	387,088	
Conservation Areas Capital	83,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52,300	135,300	
Administer Section 29 Regulations	8,681	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,681	
Other Owned Land	130,971	-	-	-	-	-	5,256	-	27,076	-	163,303	
	464,740	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	100,256	30,000	79,376	694,372	
Source Water Protection												
Source Water Protection	-	-	72,652	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72,652	
	-	-	72,652	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72,652	
Other Programs and Services												
Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN)	16,507	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16,507	
Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN)	9,430	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,430	
	25,937	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,937	
	Total Category 1	1,183,866	781,180	223,592	250,203	-	20,000	527,258	235,022	101,476	3,322,597	
Category 2 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services at the request of a Municipality												
Mapping Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	16,000	-	2,603	-	13,397	
Mosquito and Pennock Creek Monitoring	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,705	-	-	-	7,705	
	Total Category 2	-	-	-	-	-	7,705	16,000	2,603	-	21,102	
Category 3 Non-Mandatory Programs and Services												
Education												
Environmental Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	17,000.00	6,200	10,198	25,000	-	58,398
Nature Interpretive Programming	-	-	-	-	-	-	14,000	18,900	19,000	10,749	-	41,151
	-	-	-	-	-	-	31,000	25,100	29,198	14,251	-	99,549
Stewardship												
Superior Stewards Program	-	-	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40,000	
Tree Seedling Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,000	-	5,720	11,720	
Seeds for Conservation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45,000	-	-	45,000	
Stewardship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
MECP NWP Admin Controls Protocol	-	-	8,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,500	
ECCC Eco Action Indigenous Community Garden	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49,550	
ECCC GFLEI Floodway Habitat Corridor	-	-	-	77,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	77,500	
MECP Restoration Maintenance of Current Sites	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30,000	
ISC Phragmites	-	-	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40,000	
Parks Canada	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30,000	
Wolf River Sea Lamprey	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,886	-	-	-	1,886	
Neebing McIntyre Sea Lamprey	-	-	-	11,842	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,842	
	Total Category 3	-	148,500	138,892	31,000	26,986	80,198	14,251	5,720	345,998	445,547	
	Total	1,183,866	781,180	372,092	389,095	31,000	54,691	623,456	246,670	107,196	3,789,246	

FIGURE 4: LEVY ALL COMPARISON FOR THE PERIOD OF 2022-2026

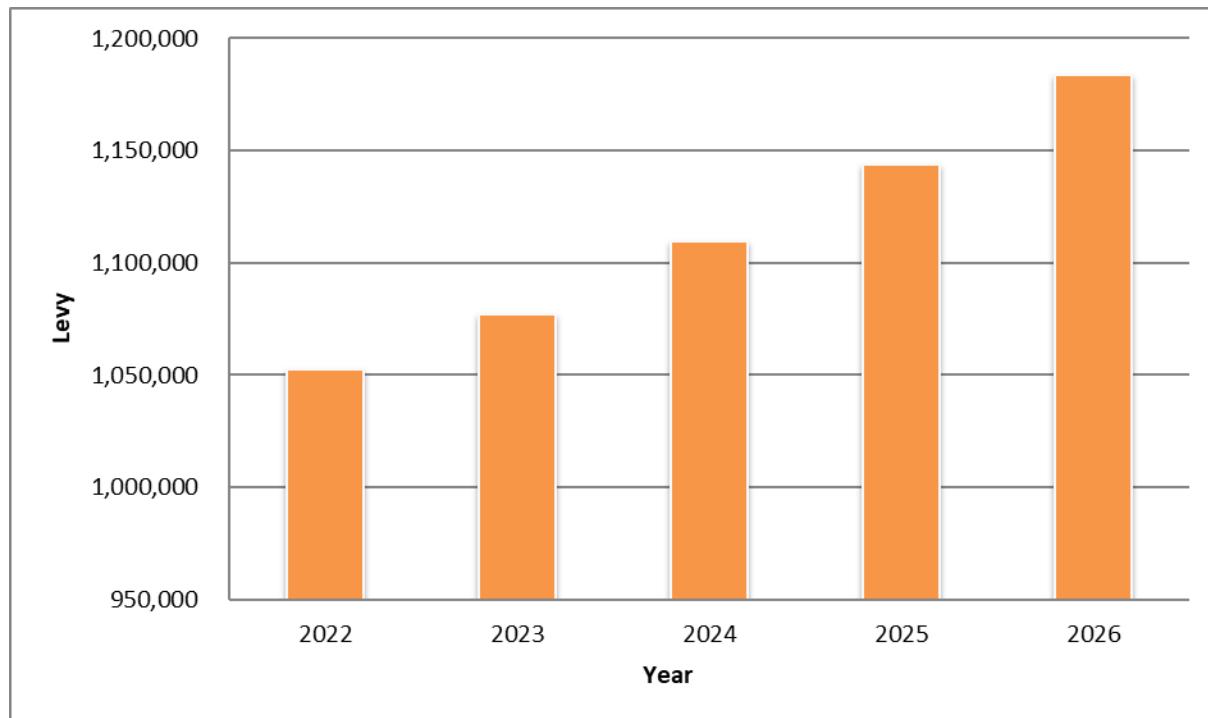


Figure 4 compares the levy-all fluctuations for the period of 2022-2026. In 2019, the long-standing Section 39 transfer payment was reduced from \$292,380 to \$150,940, which required a mid-year adjustment to the budget and also affected all future budgets. As a result of financial pressures on our Member Municipalities and the effects of COVID-19, 0% levy-all increases were implemented in 2021 and 2022.

Minimal to no increases are feasible in the short term but are not realistic for the long-term operation of the Authority. The 2026 budget requires a 3.50% increase in order to maintain its current level of service, which is consistent with cost-of-living increases.

APPENDIX B: LEVY COST COMPARISON

FIGURE 5: 2026 COMPARED TO 2025 BUDGET LEVY- ALL COMPARISON

2026 Total Levy Compared to 2025- All							
MUNICIPALITY	2026 CVA	Actual Levy 2026	2025 CVA	Levy 2025	\$ Change	% Change	
Thunder Bay*	85.6600%	1,013,620	85.8012%	979,821	33,799	3.45%	
Conmee	0.4500%	5,209	0.4440%	5,147	62	1.20%	
Dorion	0.2900%	3,433	0.2879%	3,317	116	3.49%	
Gillies	0.2500%	2,960	0.2470%	2,860	100	3.51%	
Neebing	2.2600%	26,638	2.2565%	25,852	786	3.04%	
O'Connor	0.4800%	5,684	0.4770%	5,492	192	3.51%	
Oliver Paipoonge	5.6300%	67,363	5.5386%	64,400	2,963	4.60%	
Shuniah	4.9900%	58,959	4.9477%	56,966	1,993	3.50%	
TOTAL	100%	1,183,866	100.00%	1,143,855	40,011	3.50%	

*The City of Thunder Bay total levy payable will also include their sole-benefitting levy.

The following table summarizes the annual levy cost per household, per resident and cost per \$100,000 of assessed value of property. It is noted that the resident numbers represent permanent residents and does not factor in seasonal residents.

Figure 6: Levy Cost

Municipality	2026	Number of Households (2016)	Cost Per Household	Number of Resident	Cost per Resident	Current Value Assessment \$ (2025)	Cost per \$100,000
***Thunder Bay	\$1,817,801	57,146	\$31.81	121,621	\$14.95	14,430,693,124	\$12.60
Conmee	\$5,206	327	\$15.92	816	\$6.38	74,184,750	\$7.02
Dorion	\$3,433	128	\$26.82	316	\$10.86	48,682,655	\$7.05
Gillies	\$2,960	201	\$14.73	474	\$6.24	42,491,435	\$6.97
Neebing	\$26,638	1,166	\$22.85	2,055	\$12.96	379,134,045	\$7.03
O'Connor	\$5,684	272	\$20.90	663	\$8.57	81,391,217	\$6.98
Oliver Paipoonge	\$37,363	2,289	\$16.32	5,922	\$6.31	959,038,205	\$3.90
Shuniah	\$58,959	2,130	\$27.68	2,798	\$21.07	838,817,690	\$7.03

***City of Thunder Bay Includes Sole Benefiting Levy

16,854,433,121

APPENDIX C: PASSED RESOLUTIONS



August 27, 2025

Moved By _____
Seconded By _____

"THAT: having examined the accounts for the period June 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 cheque #3581 to #3607 for \$60,298.67 and preauthorized payments of \$160,385.64 for a total of \$220,684.31, we approve their payment."

3581	Canada Post	Renewal of PO Box 10427	370.64
3582	Dawn Brizard	2025 Dorion Birding Festival meals	12,758.10
3583	Innovated Solutions	Cloud Protection	847.50
3584	KGS Group Consulting Engineers	Coastal Resilience April 2025	12,984.33
3585	Lowery's	Various Office supplies	1,429.58
3586	Northern Turf Equipment	Equipment Supplies	88.13
3587	Nova Pro Industrial Supply Ltd	Janitorial Supplies	31.87
3588	RAS Maintenance Services	Office Cleaning May	644.04
3589	Saunders Septic Pumping	Bird Festival Port-a-potties	565.00
3590	Sportop Marketing	2025 Staff Safety Shirts	812.14
3591	The Chronicle Journal	Annual report distribution	2,000.10
3592	Thunder Bay Answering Service Inc.	Answering Service June	268.04
3593	Walleye Media Inc	Advertising in the Walleye magazine	282.50
3594	Premier.ca	2024 Annual Report	11,045.75
3595	2611943 Ontario Ltd.	garbage removal Mission Jun 14, Cascades Jun 17	791.00
3596	ALS Sewage Services	Porta Potty rentals and pump out	1,050.90
3597	City of Thunder Bay	Water Bill June 2025	676.69
3598	Clow Darling	Backflow testing 2025	223.74
3599	Doane Grant Thornton LLP	Audit Fees	615.85
3600	Englobe Corp.	Victor St. Monitoring	1,717.60
3601	Francotyp-Postalia Canada Inc.	Postage Meter Rental	67.63
3602	JML Engineering	Mills Block Redevelopment	3,875.90
3603	Lowery's	Office Supplies	98.85
3604	McKitricks	Various Legal Matters	811.90
3605	Nova Pro Industrial Supply Ltd	Janitorial Supplies	485.78
3606	SGC Inc.	Sod removal and soil amendment at Floodway Waterford site	5,677.69
3607	City of Thunder Bay	Remaining balance of Water Bill	77.42
			<u>60,298.67</u>
PA	Payroll and Per Diems		117,279.46
PA	Royal Bank Group Retirement RRSP and TFSA		1,392.80
PA	RWAM and Lifeworks Benefits		4,258.18
PA	Enbridge		260.56
PA	Synergy North		540.77
PA	Esso		1,904.64
PA	Visa Routine Monthly Expenses		16,589.53
PA	Banking and Visa Fees		781.59
PA	Postage		-
PA	Omers April		16,590.52
PA	Photocopier Lease		278.59
PA	Property Taxes		-
PA	Accident Insurance		509.00
			<u>160,385.64</u>
			<u>220,684.31</u>

Chair

Res# _____ /25



August 27, 2025

Moved By

Seconded By

"THAT: having examined the accounts for the period July 1, 2025 to July 31, 2025 cheque #3608 to #3636 for \$58,56.43 and preauthorized payments of \$156,534.25 for a total of \$215,490.68, we approve their payment."

3608	ALS Sewage Services	Mission Marsh Outhouse	355.95
3609	boy roland	1st installment of mural painting	6,215.00
3610	Doane Grant Thornton LLP	2nd quarter QBO fees	406.80
3611	Equipment World	Water Festival Tent Rentals	1,038.70
3612	Innovated Solutions	Cloud Protection	847.50
3613	Iron Range Bus Lines Inc	Bussing Children's Water Festival	2,329.25
3614	KGS Group Consulting Engineers	Coastal Resilience Management Plan	9,457.14
3615	Lowery's	Office Supplies	250.62
3616	Northern Turf Equipment	Equipment Repairs	314.09
3617	Thunder Bay Answering Service Inc.	Answering Service	268.04
3618	Walleye Media Inc	Advertising in the Walleye magazine	146.90
3619	Allied Air Systems	Repair board room unit	1,920.24
3620	ALS Sewage Services	Porta Potty Units	864.45
3621	Black and Tan Taxidermy	Taxidermy - kestrel	226.00
3622	CDS Consulting Limited	Coastal Resilience study, Pedestrian bridge Clayte St	5,593.50
3623	City of Thunder Bay - Provincial Taxes	Provincial Taxes	3,880.50
3624	Conservation Ontario	ESRI subscription 2025	3,122.87
3625	Design House Publications	Ads re Coastal Resilience Open House	447.48
3626	Doane Grant Thornton LLP	2024 Audit LCF	1,354.87
3627	JML Engineering	Progress bill for June 2025	1,356.00
3628	Lowery's	Office Supplies	2,583.46
3629	Mike Carneiro Workplace Safety North PCO Non		
	Logging Instructor	Chainsaw course	1,040.00
3630	Municipality Of Neebing	Property Taxes	60.07
3631	Northern Turf Equipment	Equipment repairs	218.51
3632	Nova Pro Industrial Supply Ltd	Various Janitorial Supplies	568.45
3633	RAS Maintenance Services	Janitorial service for June 2025	515.23
3634	Shout Media	Sign Strategy	13,062.80
3635	Township of O'Connor	Property Taxes	48.71
3636	Weather Innovations Consulting LP	Rain Gauges	463.30
			58,956.43
PA	Payroll and Per Diems		108,487.99
PA	Royal Bank Group Retirement RRSP and TFSA		1,392.80
PA	RWAM and Lifeworks Benefits		5,121.30
PA	Enbridge		61.40
PA	Synergy North		628.41
PA	Esso		1,505.78
PA	Visa Routine Monthly Expenses		20,510.92
PA	Banking and Visa Fees		717.54
PA	Postage		-
PA	Omers July		17,829.52
PA	Photocopier Lease		278.59
PA	Property Taxes		-
PA	Accident Insurance		-
			156,534.25
			215,490.68

Res# _____/25

Chair

Monthly Plan Input/Review and Fill Regulations Administration

June 1 to 30, 2025

Municipality	Minor Variance (A)	Consent (B)	Official Plan	Official Plan/ Zoning By-Law Comprehensive	Zoning By-Law (Z)	Subdivisions	Clearances	Reality Services	Lawyer Inquiries	Letter of Opinion (Other)	Total
City of Thunder Bay	A25-4						1745 Paquette Road	555 Dunlop Street			
							218 May Street S				
							11 & 15A St Paul St				
							15C St Paul St				
							242 Red River Road				
Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	7
Oliver Paipoonge		1B/10/25									
		1B/11/25									
Total	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
O'Connor				2025-01							
Total	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Neebing											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shuniah											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conmee											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gillies											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dorion											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rural Planning Board				1B/06/25							
Total	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Monthly Total	1	3	0	0	1	0	1	5	0	0	11

Monthly Plan Input/Review and Fill Regulations Administration

July 1 to 31, 2025

Municipality	Minor Variance (A)	Consent (B)	Official Plan	Official Plan/ Zoning By-Law Comprehensive	Zoning By-Law (Z)	Subdivisions	Clearances	Reality Services	Lawyer Inquiries	Letter of Opinion (Other)	Total
City of Thunder Bay	B-34-2025						2171 R.S. Piper Avenue	Kembel Road Allowance	4041 Garden Avenue		
	B-40-2025							132 Algoma Street S	2451 Dawson Road		
								1030 Simpson Street			
								234 Belton Street			
Total	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	0	9
Oliver Paipoonge	1B/16/25										
	1B/12/25 & 1B/13/25										
	1B/14/25 & 1B/15/25										
	1B/07/25 - Revised										
Total	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
O'Connor											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neebing	B01-2025										
	B02-2025										
Total	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Shuniah					Z24-2		Vacant Lot Grann Drive				
Total	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Conmee											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gillies											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dorion											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rural Planning Board											
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monthly Total	0	8	0	0	1	0	2	4	2	0	17

Monthly Plan Input/Review and Fill Regulations Administration August 1 to 18, 2025

Municipality	Minor Variance (A)	Consent (B)	Official Plan	Official Plan/ Zoning By-Law Comprehensive Review	Zoning By-Law (Z)	Subdivisions	Clearances	Reality Services	Lawyer Inquiries	Letter of Opinion (Other)	Total
City of Thunder Bay					Z-10-2024 & 58T-24501				3354 Oliver Road 234 Trinity Crescent		
	Total	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
Oliver Paipoonge							388 Hanna Road				
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
O'Connor											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neebing											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shuniah											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conmee											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gillies											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dorion											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rural Planning Board											
	Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Monthly Total	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	4

Prohibited Activities, Exceptions and Permits- Ontario Regulation 41/24
Year: 2025

Permit #	Category	Fee	Applicant Name	Municipality	Subject Property Address	Type of Work	Key Dates					Minor OR Major Application (Timeline BP Minor = 30d Major = 90d)	Within Timelines
							Complete Application Received with Permit Fee Paid (YYYY-MM-DD)	Notice of Complete/Incomplete Application ISSUED (YYYY-MM-DD)	Days to Issue Notice of Complete/Incomplete Application (21 day timeline)	Permit Issued / Refused (YYYY-MM-DD)	Days to Issue /Refuse Permit (90 day timeline)		
#25/25	Standard	\$300.00	George Biniaris	City of Thunder Bay	Lot 18 Bruin Crescent	Dwelling Construction	2025-06-10	2025-06-16	6	2025-06-19	3	Minor	Yes
#26/25	Small	\$150.00	Bernard Doran	Shuniah	793 Wild Goose Bay Road	Retaining Wall Removal & Site Grading	2025-05-29	2025-06-09	11	2025-06-11	2	Minor	Yes
#27/25	Standard	\$300.00	Garrett Moulard	City of Thunder Bay	125 Bruin Crescent, Lot 7	Dwelling Construction	2025-06-16	2025-06-23	7	2025-06-24	1	Minor	Yes
#28/25	Standard	\$300.00	Don Kruse	Oliver Paipoonge	759 Poleline Road	Storage Shed Construction	2025-06-17	2025-06-23	6	2025-06-24	1	Minor	Yes
#29/25	Small	\$150.00	Jarvis Sameluk	Shuniah	725 Wild Goose Bay Road	Maintenance Dredging	2025-06-05	2025-06-19	14	2025-06-24	5	Minor	Yes
#30/25	Small	\$150.00	Rob LeBlanc	Shuniah	749 Wild Goose Bay Road	Erosion Protection (Gabion Baskets)	2025-06-16	2025-06-23	7	2025-06-25	2	Minor	Yes
#31/25	Standard	N/A	City of Thunder Bay	City of Thunder Bay	Onion Lake Rd. at McVicar Creek	Culvert Replacement	2025-06-17	2025-06-23	6	2025-07-04	11	Minor	Yes
#32/25	Major	\$2,000.00	Josh Busiuk & Vaughn Ahola	City of Thunder Bay	71 Twin City Crossroads	Fill Placement & Fill Removal	2025-06-25	2025-07-09	14	2025-07-10	1	Major	Yes
#33/25	Standard	\$300.00	Michael Coffey	City of Thunder Bay	2129 Normandy Court	Garage Construction	2025-06-24	2025-06-24	0	2025-07-03	9	Minor	Yes
#34/25	Standard	N/A	Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge	Oliver Paipoonge	McCluskey Drive Newton Creek Culver	Culvert Replacement	2025-06-19	2025-06-24	5	2025-07-03	9	Minor	Yes
#35/25	Standard	N/A	City of Thunder Bay	City of Thunder Bay	Clayte Street Pedestrian Bridge	Bridge Removal and Replacement	2025-05-02	2025-06-18	47	2025-07-03	15	Minor	No
#36/25	Standard	N/A	City of Thunder Bay	City of Thunder Bay	Hartviksen Street Pedestrian Bridge	Bridge Removal and Replacement	2025-05-02	2025-06-18	47	2025-07-03	15	Minor	No
#37/25	Large	\$600.00	Sydney Lopez	City of Thunder Bay	1510 Paquette Road	Dwelling Construction	2025-07-03	2025-07-03	0	2025-07-04	1	Minor	Yes
#38/25	Small	\$150.00	Ted & Amanda Zaporzan	Needing	778 Cloud Lake Road	Erosion Protection	2025-07-09	2025-07-10	1	2025-07-10	0	Minor	Yes
#39/25	Standard	N/A	Municipality of Shuniah	Shuniah	Lakeshore Drive	Culvert Replacement	2025-07-10	2025-07-21	11	2025-07-21	0	Minor	Yes
#40/25	Standard	N/A	Municipality of Shuniah	Shuniah	Lakeshore Drive - 64 Culvert	Culvert Replacement	2025-07-10	2025-07-29	19	2025-07-31	2	Minor	Yes
#41/25	Standard	N/A	City of Thunder Bay	City of Thunder Bay	2285 Sleeping Giant Parkway	Fill removal, fill placement & Site Grading	2025-07-22	2025-07-31	9	2025-08-05	5	Minor	Yes
#42/25	Small	\$150.00	Christopher Lawrence & Susan Mai	Shuniah	3205 Nelson Drive	Shoreline Regrading	2025-07-29	2025-08-05	7	2025-08-07	2	Minor	Yes
#43/25	Small	\$150.00	Mark McGarvey	Shuniah	1862 Mackenzie Beach Ave	Shoreline Regrading	2025-08-01	2025-08-05	4	2025-08-13	8	Minor	Yes
#45/25	Standard	N/A	City of Thunder Bay	City of Thunder Bay	25th Side Road	Culvert Replacement	2025-07-16	2025-08-05	20	2025-08-11	6	Minor	Yes
#46/25	Small	\$150.00	Matthew Holmes	City of Thunder Bay	1637 Coral Bay Drive	Dock Repair / Expansion	2025-06-18	2025-08-07	50	2025-08-11	4	Minor	No
#47/25	Standard	\$300.00	Shelley Crawford	Shuniah	2227 Amethyst Avenue	Garage Construction	2025-08-07	2025-08-13	6	2025-08-13	0	Minor	Yes
#48/25	Large	\$600.00	L. Sebastianis Contracting	City of Thunder Bay	195 & 197 Bruin Crescent (Lot 26)	Dwelling Construction	2025-08-12	2025-08-12	0	2025-08-13	1	Minor	Yes
									0		0		



Monthly Project Update

MEETING DATE	August 27, 2025
STAFF NAME	Ryan Mackett
POSITION	Communications Manager

2025 Silver Harbour Day

The 2025 Silver Harbour Day event took place on Saturday, July 26, 2025 at Silver Harbour Conservation Area. Approximately 230 people came out to the event. The event featured displays/activities from the LRCA, Thunder Bay Field Naturalists, Municipality of Shuniah, and Nature Conservancy of Canada. The Canada Coast Guard was present with the Cape Chaillon; additionally, Thunder Country Diving was present, along with the Superior Mermaids who were providing free face painting. The local disc golf group currently working with the Authority on the Silver Harbour Disc Golf course were also at the event, conducting disc gold demos. Local media were also present. The event was a success.

2025 Little Trout Bay Fish Derby

The second Little Trout Bay Fish Derby occurred on Saturday, August 23. A verbal update will be provided at the Meeting.

Coffee Fundraiser

LRCA staff participated in a special blending exercise at Rose N Crantz coffee to establish a unique blend for a custom LRCA coffee to be used as a fundraiser with the LCF this fall. Staff have developed the LRCA's very own "Early Bird Blend". Pre-orders will occur later this summer/early fall for the first round. Additional bags will be purchased for resale at the LRCA office and for promos, etc. Depending on the success of the initial launch, a second round of sales may occur in November to coincide with the release of the 2026 Explore Card and holiday shopping season. The coffee will be sold in 227 gram bags, either ground or whole bean. Proceeds will be in support of the LRCA's education program. The cost per bag will likely be around \$17.

CEDC Mural

Local artist boy Roland has begun work on the office mural located on the storage shed. Funding for this project was partially provided by the CEDC.

LU Student Orientation

Typically, LRCA staff attend the Lakehead University international student orientation at the LU Hanger building, however this year the event is being combined with the overall LU student orientation, and will be held at the LU Outpost on Thursday, August 28 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. The Communications Manager and Lands Manager will be in attendance to promote the LRCA's Conservation Areas as well as to encourage students to apply for summer employment next season.



Monthly Project Update

MEETING DATE	August 27, 2025
STAFF NAME	Ryne Gilliam
POSITION	Lands Manager

Cascades Tree Planting

Ten trees were planted within the open field area at Cascades Conservation Area. The trees range from Flowering Crabs, a variety of Maples and Japanese Ivory Silk Lilacs. When planted all trees were staked and watering bags added to the base. These trees will add to the visual aesthetic of the area while acting as shade trees in the future.



Photo 1: Trees planted at Cascades Conservation Area.



Wishart Harvesting

Forestry operations continue within Block 2 at Wishart Conservation Area. The area is being cut in a selective harvesting approach. Once complete the lookout trail will be re-established and tree planting will occur.



Photo: Harvested area within Block 2 of Wishart Conservation Area.



Neebing-McIntyre Encampments

An increase in encampments along the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway have been identified and engaged with throughout the summer months. To date a total of nine encampments have been identified and LRCA staff are following the board approved Standard Operating Procedure in dealing with them. These encampments are mainly along the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway near the intercity area (Fort William Rd, LCBO-Home Depot, Forest St).



Photo 3: An abandoned encampment at Fort William Rd property along Neebing-McIntyre Floodway.



Spray Paint Vandalism

An increase of spray paint vandalism has occurred over the summer months. Mission Island Marsh, Silver Harbour and Hurkett Cove Conservation Areas have all received spray paint vandalism. When this occurs LRCA staff quickly act to remove or cover up this graffiti.



Photo 4: Spray paint vandalism on pavilion sign at Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area.



Sea Lamprey Trap Opening Ceremony

In collaboration with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC), the LRCA is hosting an opening ceremony for the new permanent sea lamprey trap on the Neebing River. As the only permanent facility of its kind on the Canadian side of Lake Superior, the trap allows for critical data collection on adult sea lamprey and supports the overall management strategy.

The ceremony will be held on September 11, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM at the Neebing River Weir on Parkway Drive. Following the event, guests are invited to attend a screening of *The Fish Thief: A Great Lakes Mystery*—an award-winning documentary highlighting the devastating impact of the sea lamprey invasion on the Great Lakes ecosystem. The screening will take place at The Outpost pub on Lakehead University campus, beginning at 12:30 PM, with a light lunch provided. All board members will receive an invitation via email.



Monthly Project Update

MEETING DATE	August 27, 2025
STAFF NAME	Melissa Hughson
POSITION	Watershed Manager

Watershed Conditions – Lake Superior Water Levels

Lake Superior's water level rose 13 centimetres between the beginning of July 2025 and beginning of August 2025 which is the 3rd largest rise on record. The beginning of August level is 5 centimetres below the Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2024). It is likely that the lake level has peaked during the month of August and will begin its seasonal decline within the next month.

Watershed Conditions – Low Water/Flood Forecasting

Precipitation received during the month of July was 176% of the monthly average. The 3- and 18-month summaries are slightly above average and near average respectively. A significant rainfall event was received on July 23, 2025. Staff monitor the weather forecast and watercourse gauges daily; based on recorded observations, there continued to be sufficient capacity in the area watercourses and riverine flooding was not expected and therefore flood messaging was not required.

Lakehead Coastal Resilience Management Plan Project

The first public open-house for the Lakehead Coastal Resilience Management Plan project was held on July 16th at the LRCA administrative office. The purpose of the engagement session was to introduce the project to the public and to gain feedback from members of the community on their interactions with Lake Superior and what resilience means to them. The Consultant Team (KGS/DHI/Zuzek) was at the open-house and available to answer questions. TBnewswatch was in attendance and an article about the project was posted to their website: <https://www.tbnewswatch.com/local-news/planning-for-the-future-lrca-studying-climate-risks-on-lake-superior-10961517>.

Project information including information from the open-house and an Early Engagement Survey is posted to the project website: www.lakeheadresilience.com; the survey will be open until the end of August.

Next steps for the study will include continuing with field investigations and background reviews to inform the technical analysis and hazard mapping. The Hazard Mapping Reporting is planned to be drafted for review for the fall of 2026. The next public open-house is tentatively scheduled for November of 2026.

Stewardship & Seeds for Conservation

This spring, LRCA's stewardship team hired a summer student, Fiona Hinz, through the Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre Youth Effect Program funding, covering 100% of her wages for 16 weeks. As a result of her hard work and great attitude, paired with additional funding from MNR to run a fall 2025 Shoreline Protection Program, her contract has been extended until October 31, 2025. The spring planting season saw over 4,000 native trees, shrubs and perennials installed at the Floodway Habitat Corridor, the Neebing River Weir, Water St Overlook, Fisherman's Park West, Mission Island Marsh, and through the Cyanobacteria Shoreline Protection Program. Of those plants 1,500 were grown by LRCA's Seeds for Conservation Program. The Cyanobacteria Shoreline Protection Program had far-reaching education and outreach, with a public open house and presentations in schools, to campers' associations, and at a "Nerd Night". In total, 11 participants received individualized shoreline consultation and free native plants from LRCA for shoreline restoration on their blue-green-algae-affected properties. As we look towards the fall planting season, LRCA staff and volunteers will be restoring 3 additional sites with over 4,000 plants going in the ground; half of which will be supplied by Seeds for Conservation.

The Seeds for Conservation spring plant sale on June 4, 2025, generated \$1,506 in pre-orders alone (pre-orders were by invitation to our email list of stewardship volunteers), and an additional \$1,811.75 at the event, for a total of \$3,317.75 in sales and over 600 plants sold. Sales continued to the public and community partners through the LRCA webstore.

Invasive species efforts have involved volunteer pulls at restoration sites, emerald ash borer surveys in LRCA's Conservation Areas, ongoing monitoring of Invasive Cattail at Hurkett Cove Conservation Area, and continued monitoring and management of Invasive Phragmites in the Thunder Bay region. In August, LRCA partnered with Red Rock Indian Band, Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Parks Canada to pull a small stand of Invasive Cattail in Hurkett Cove, nestled between the culturally sensitive plant: Northern Wild Rice. A great day in the field was had by all! Surveys of existing and new Invasive Phragmites stands in the region are ongoing, along with collaboration with MTO, CP Rail, Thunder Bay Port Authority, and other project partners. Over 10 new Invasive Phragmites stands will be treated this fall thanks to funding from Invasive Species Centre and MNR.