



Grey Sauble
CONSERVATION

2022 | DRAFT BUDGET COMPANION REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

GSCA PROFILE	1
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	2
MISSION & VISION	3
2022 BUDGET INCREASE SUMMARY	4
2022 BUDGET BY SERVICE AREA	5
ADMINISTRATION SERVICES	7 - 8
Administration, Finance & Human Resources	9 - 10
Fleet & Equipment Management	11
INFORMATION SERVICES	12 - 13
Geographic Information Systems & Information Technology	14 - 15
Communications	16 - 17
Education	18 - 19
FORESTRY	20
GSCA Forestry	21 - 22
Grey Sauble Forestry Service	23 - 24



CONSERVATION LANDS

25 - 26

GSCA Lands, Policy & Strategy

27 - 28

Conservation Lands Operations

29 - 31

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & REGULATIONS

32 - 34

FLOOD FORECASTING & MANAGEMENT

35

Flood Forecasting & Warning

36 - 37

Flood & Erosion Control Structures
& Other Dams

38

WATER QUALITY MONITORING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

39

Monitoring & Watershed Management

40 - 41

STEWARDSHIP

42 - 45

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION

46 - 47

Drinking Water Source Protection Planning

48 - 49

Drinking Water Source Protection

Risk Management

50



ADMINISTRATION
| 4.0 FTEs
\$822,250

INFORMATION
SERVICES | 3.5 FTEs
\$450,929

CONSERVATION
LANDS | 7.4 FTEs
\$807,442

DRINKING WATER
PROTECTION | 2.4 FTEs
\$256,120

PLANNING &
PERMITS | 4.8 FTEs
\$414,298

FORESTRY | 3.3 FTEs
\$391,561

FLOOD FORECASTING
| 1.3 FTEs
\$200,727

WATER QUALITY
| 1.2 FTEs
\$99,704

STEWARDSHIP
| 1 FTE
\$62,776

GSCA PROFILE

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) conserves and nurtures the natural environment, protects people and property from natural hazards, and inspires stewardship and environmental awareness within local communities. With a team of over 30 full-time, part-time, contract, and seasonal staff, GSCA delivers vital conservation work across the region through essential programs and services that protect and enhance a healthy watershed.

The Grey Sauble watershed is complex and includes five major rivers and numerous smaller tributaries, spanning all or parts of 8 local municipalities. As such, delivering services with an integrated approach across the entire watershed is crucial to upholding clean water; safe communities; access to environmental education and recreation opportunities; and healthy forests and wetlands for all to enjoy.

Within this expansive area, GSCA owns and manages over 11,000 hectares of the most scenic and environmentally sensitive lands in Grey and Bruce Counties and delivers programs and services throughout its 3100 square kilometer watershed boundary. GSCA's value to this entire watershed community is delivered through the 9 service areas detailed in the pages that follow. The employees championing these programs and services uphold GSCA's mandate and support the vision of a healthy watershed environment in balance with the needs of society.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

THE 2019-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN IDENTIFIES SEVERAL GOALS THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE REALIZATION OF GSCA'S VISION.

- Better monitor and manage flood risks
- Enhance GSCA land management and natural heritage preservation
- Support the development of watershed plans with municipalities
- Improve water quality
- Strengthen environmental education and communication

VISION

A healthy watershed environment in balance with the needs of society.

MISSION

GSCA's mission, in partnership with the stakeholders of the watershed, is to promote and undertake sustainable management of renewable natural resources and to provide responsible leadership to enhance biodiversity and environmental awareness.



2022 BUDGET INCREASE SUMMARY

GSCA strives to provide excellence in corporate management and client services through our dedicated, experienced staff and the programs that we offer to our communities. Similar to our municipal partners, GSCA entered 2021 amidst several challenges and a higher than usual level of uncertainty associated with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Although these situations appear to be stabilizing, it is anticipated that 2022 will still hold similar challenges.

To help reduce the overall impact on ratepayers and member municipalities, GSCA uses several mechanisms, where feasible, to drive revenue generation and limit the reliance on municipal levy.

In the 2021 budget year, municipal levy accounted for approximately 46 percent of the total budgeted revenue, transfer payments from the Province for Drinking Water Source Protection and Natural Hazards accounted for approximately 7 percent, and the remainder (47%) was derived from other sources, including self-generated revenues, grants and agreements.

The GSCA draft 2022 budget totals \$3.4 million for Operating and Capital expenditures combined. This is up from \$3.3 million in 2021. Although several mandatory cost increases associated with salary, CPP, insurance and property taxes have gone up by more than \$180,000, GSCA has managed to keep the total expense increase to \$133,000 over 2021.

In the 2022 budget year, municipal levy is proposed to account for approximately 47 percent of the total budgeted revenue, transfer payments from the Province for Drinking Water Source Protection and Natural Hazards will account for approximately 7 percent, and the remainder (46%) will be derived from other sources, including self-generated revenues, grants and agreements.

The total levy increase for 2022 is proposed to be \$83,194 more than the 2021 budget. This equates to a percentage levy increase of 5.64 percent. This increase is higher than that necessary in recent years, however, it is largely associated with costs that GSCA has little to no control over. A breakdown of this levy increase is presented in the following table:

LEVY INCREASE DRIVERS	ASSOCIATED INCREASE (\$)	ASSOCIATED INCREASE (%)
Insurance Premium Increase	\$28,805	1.95%
COLA	\$21,134	1.43%
Salary Review (partial)	\$16,938	1.15%
Other	\$16,317	1.11%
Total Impact	\$83,194	5.64%

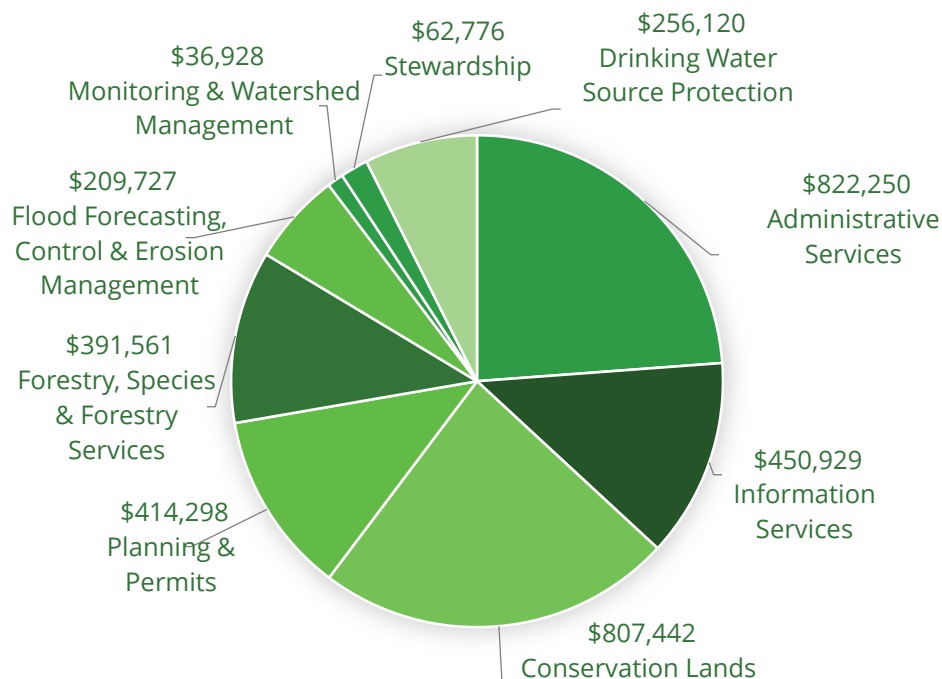


GSCA has experienced substantial increases in insurance premiums over the last several years. The 2022 budget accounts for the 2022 increase, as well as for the unforeseen portion of the 2021 increase.

In 2021, GSCA undertook a review of staff positions and salaries compared to similar organizations within the market. This review was conducted by a third-party consulting firm and was approved by the GSCA Board of Directors at the July 2021 Full Authority meeting. To reduce the impacts of this review on the 2022 levy, GSCA is utilizing existing surplus to offset the impacts in year one. The remainder of the impact will be carried into the 2023 operating budget.

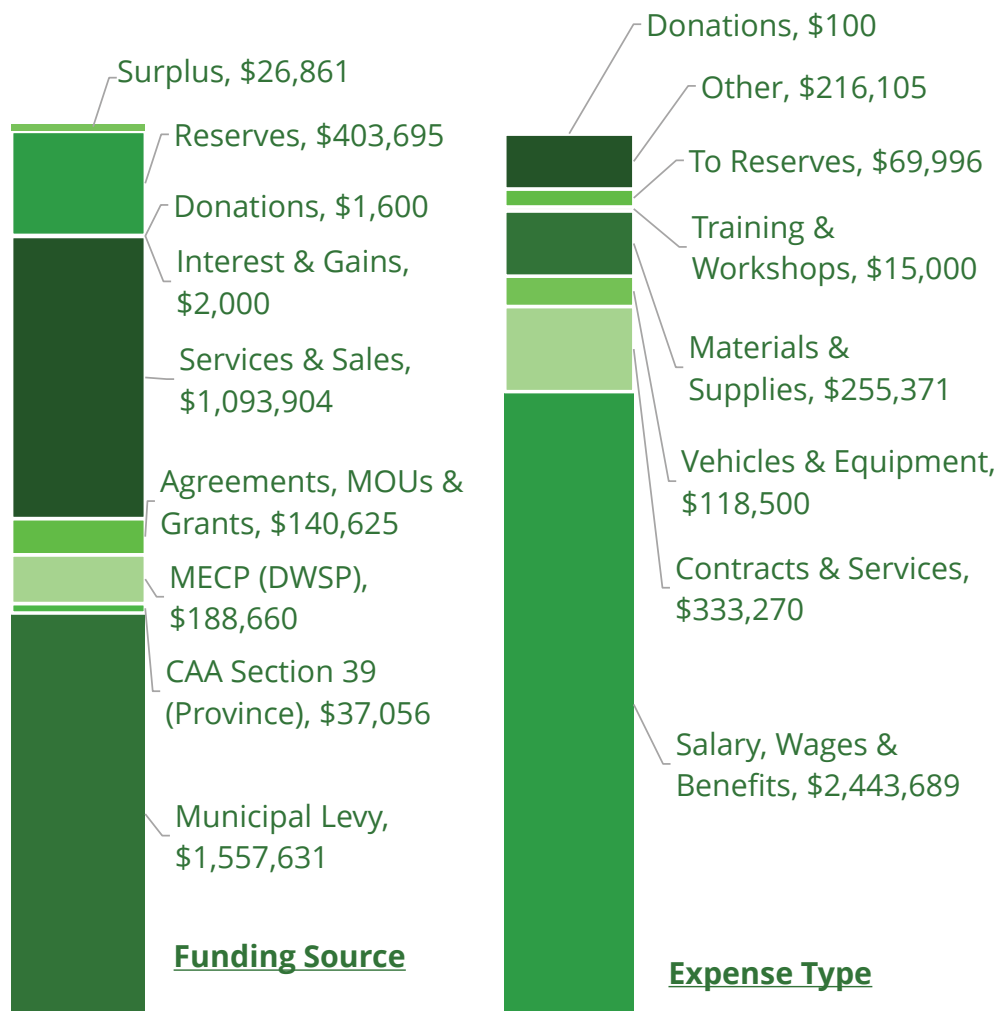
The line item identified as “Other” accounts for other ongoing expenses within the organization including property taxes and the fulfillment of succession planning changes within the organization.

2022 BUDGET BY SERVICE AREA
TOTAL BUDGET \$3,452,032





FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES





ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

Administration Services provides ongoing management of the organization, including strategic planning, partnership networking, finance management and staffing resources. 2021 was another challenging year in the face of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and limitations, leading to the streamlining of certain functions and services. Additionally, GSCA experienced some staffing transitions in 2021 that required the organization to respond with resourcefulness and flexibility.

Administration Services consists of the following:

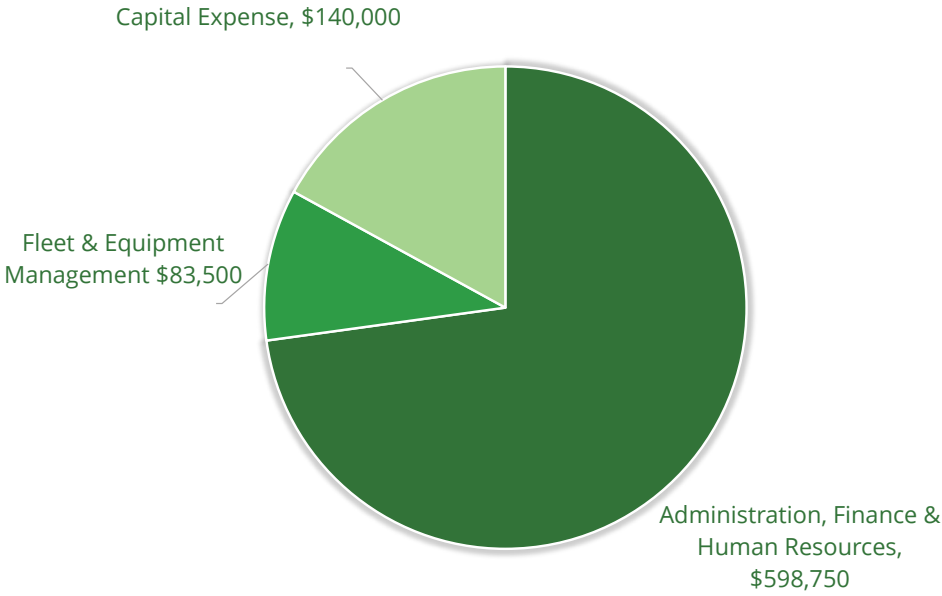
Administration, Finance & Human Resources

Notable changes in the budget from 2021 to 2022 are predominantly in an increase in salary/wages and an increase in insurance premiums ("other"). This department also sees a decrease in contracts and services. Funding within the department will require an increase in levy funding and an increase in services and sales. Surplus will be utilized to slightly offset the impacts of the Salary Compensation Review.

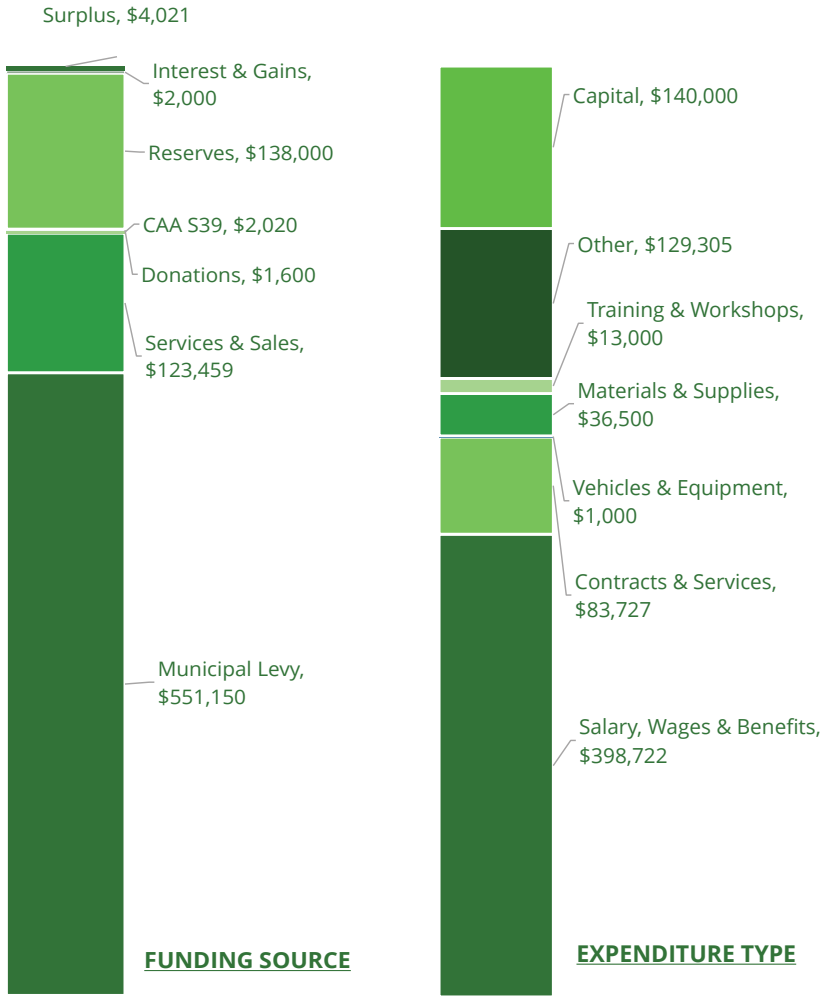
Fleet & Equipment Management

The expenses in the department are proposed to decrease in 2022, associated with a reduction in contribution to the Fleet and Equipment Reserve. This is reflective of a reduction in Fleet and Equipment usages across the other Departments.

ADMINISTRATION SERVICES



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$822,250





ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES

Administration, Finance, and Human Resources provides leadership and ongoing management of daily finances and staffing resources central to the successful operation of the entire organization. This includes functions such as payroll, accounts payable/receivable, financial reporting, records management, strategic planning, staff support, and partnership building.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- GSCA has been successful in continuing to find operational efficiencies and opportunities.
- Developed a Transition Plan as per the requirements of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, including vital consultations with municipal partners.
- Completed a comprehensive staff compensation and pay equity review.
- Developed a suite of recruitment and performance management support materials for managerial staff.
- Worked with partners and stakeholders to forge new relationships and strengthen existing ones.
- Completed ongoing updates to GSCA Policies and By-Laws to keep them contemporary and relevant.
- Provided several updates to GSCA's public facing website to improve transparency, accountability, and access to information.
- Analyzed Environmental Planning service rates and fees to improve corporate sustainability and client services.
- Transitioned to a new payroll software.



2022 FOCUS

- Continue to consult and work with municipal partners on new municipal funding agreements.
- Complete consultation and implementation of new Environmental Planning rates and fees.
- Develop and consult on GSCA's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.
- Implement new requirements under the *Conservation Authorities Act*.
- Continue to find creative new partnerships and funding opportunities.

INTERESTING FACTS

- 1% levy increase is equivalent to approximately \$14,000.
- Administration Staff facilitated the issuance of over 800 Yearly Parking Membership Passes in 2021.



FLEET & EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

Fleet & Equipment Management oversees the management and maintenance of all GSCA's vehicles and equipment, including purchases, repairs, scheduled vehicle maintenance, licenses and insurance.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Issued a request for tenders for two new GSCA passenger vehicles.
- Purchased two new GSCA trucks and one passenger vehicle.
- Investigated the integration of an electric vehicle into GSCA's vehicle fleet.
- Sold two GSCA vehicles.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA owns and manages 15 vehicles and close to \$70,000 in equipment.

2022 FOCUS

- Conduct ongoing preventative maintenance and repairs, as well as licencing and insurance updates for vehicles.
- Create new systems to track vehicle and equipment maintenance.
- Update all vehicle logs.
- Continue to assess the needs of GSCA's fleet.



INFORMATION SERVICES

This service area oversees the management, delivery, training and direction of various types of internal and external information produced and stored by GSCA. Information Services consists of three main departments:

Information Systems & Technology

The most notable year-over-year changes in this department are associated with an increase in salary and wages, and a decrease in dependence on reserves. The primary driver for the increase in salary is the increase in staffing approved in the 2021 budget to facilitate succession planning for the organization. The 2021 budget utilized reserves to offset this impact, with the remainder being recognized in the 2022 budget. Surplus will be utilized to slightly offset the impacts of the Salary Compensation Review.

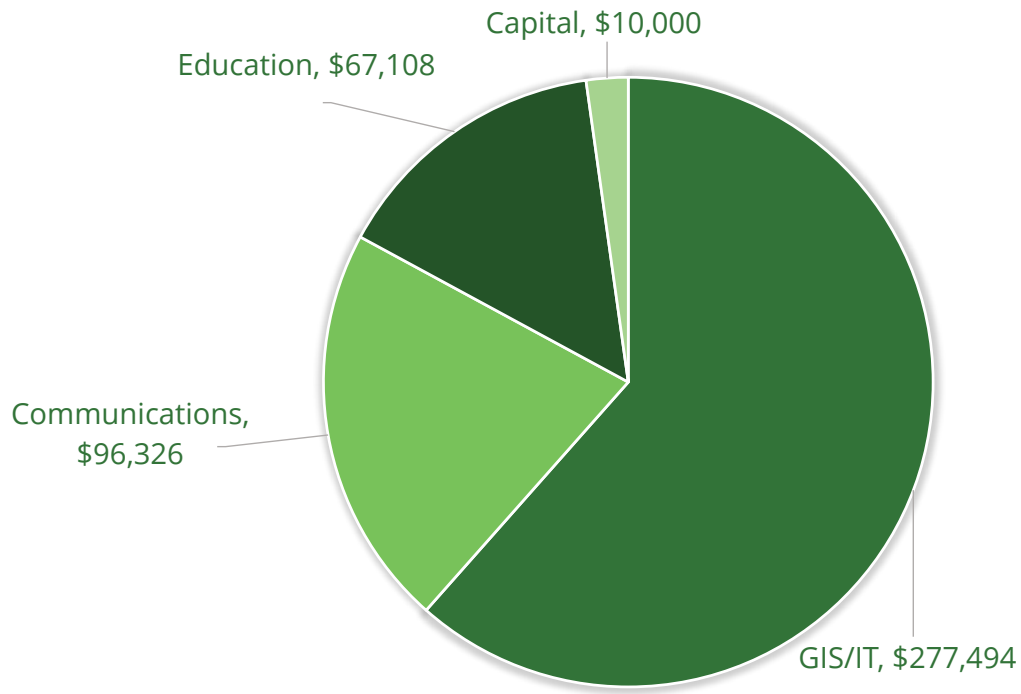
Communications

This department shows slight increases in wages and in contracts & services. Overall, the expenditures in this budget are decreasing from 2021 to 2022, and the levy funding is also decreasing. Surplus will be utilized to slightly offset the impacts of the Salary Compensation Review.

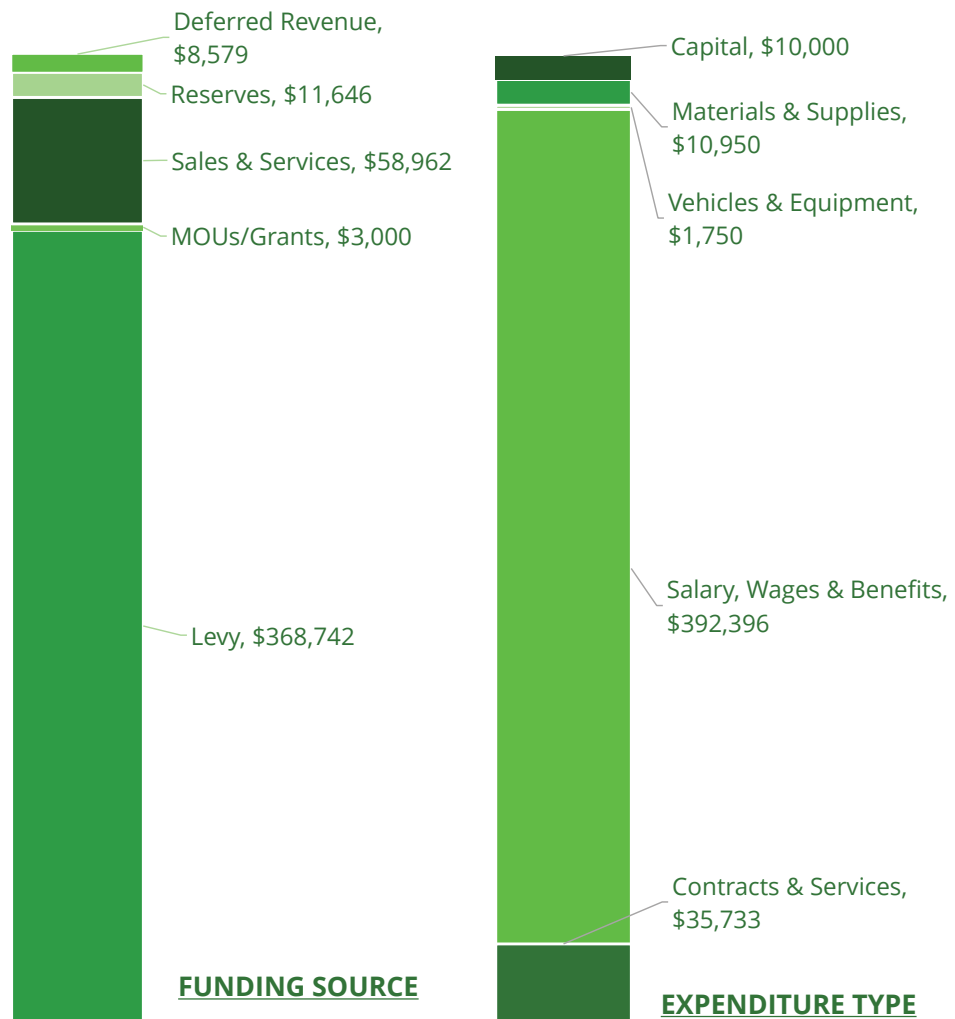
Environmental Education

Overall, this budget is proposed to increase by approximately \$15,000 over the previous year. This budget is currently funded entirely through user fees. In 2022, this department will draw from the Education Reserve to help fund contract staffing that will work to expand the programming to meet GSCA's Strategic Goals.

INFORMATION SERVICES



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$450,929





GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Southwestern Ontario Orthophotography (SWOOP) 2020 was flown last year and received in August, 2021.
- Created and improved mapping products through the ongoing use of LiDAR data, such as establishing a more accurate 100-year flood line along the Lake Huron shoreline.
- Continued ongoing remote work management and support for all staff.
- Began an offsite backup process to ensure data safety and compliance with Cyber insurance requirements.
- Developed an online Ontario Regulation 151/06 permit application to streamline the permitting process.
- Assisted with implementing paid parking hardware and software at 5 gatehouses to make paying for parking more accessible for GSCA property visitors.
- Updated and improved the asset management database.
- Supported all mapping needs, including the updated Explore Guide and Watershed Health Reviews.
- Provided ongoing technical support for Board of Directors, including WebEx Board meetings and the Board portal site.



2022 FOCUS

- Investigate and move to a more fiscally responsible phone system that allows us to make use of improved internet speeds.
- Update and improve base features and regulations mapping using 2020 air photos and stereo models.
- Work with Forestry and Lands departments to establish a more integrated and accessible database for managing all GSCA lands information.
- Establish processes and create an application for online tree sale purchasing.
- Provide an update to the popular permitted uses map that reflects the current branding strategy and aligns with the Explore Guide mapping techniques.
- Improve Ontario Regulation 151/06 mapping using the best available data (such as SWOOP 2020 and LiDAR) to accurately reflect ground conditions.
- Support improvements to our finance system.
- Develop an application for staff use that will ensure ongoing, efficient vehicle and equipment maintenance and booking

INTERESTING FACTS

- GIS/IT manage and back up dozens of terabytes of data.
- Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) measures the time that it takes for the light from laser pulses, emitted to the ground, to return. These measurements results in high quality ground elevation information. GSCA uses this data to illustrate topography, help map natural hazards and define watersheds.



COMMUNICATIONS

Communications Staff guide effective external communications and provide services and materials designed to increase awareness and support for the vital work of GSCA. Communications Staff also deliver priority communications, including public and media relations, advertising, content creation, and social media/website management.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed the new Explore Guide that highlights 22 of GSCA's most popular properties and began promotion of this resource.
- Began process development for the 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan.
- Continued implementation of the branding strategy, which included training for staff and the board.
- Promoted Bothwell's Creek and Indian Brook Watershed Health Reviews.
- Created a newsletter for Members' Pass holders that highlights GSCA updates, which will be issued in the spring, summer, fall, and winter.
- Supported a virtual summer job recruitment event.
- Improved our social media presence with a consistent look that was established through the branding strategy.
- Provided ongoing support of departmental, GSCA Foundation, and partner group communications needs and content creation.
- Researched, designed, and had a new interpretive sign fabricated at Clendenan Conservation Area with the support of the Nature League.
- Began developing new materials to highlight sustainable forest management on GSCA's website and social media.
- Provided additional support to the Planning Department while staff vacancies were being filled.



2022 FOCUS

- Provide support for the development of GSCA's 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan.
- Participate in training and professional development opportunities to increase staff knowledge and efficiencies.
- Continue to implement the branding guidelines and key messaging in GSCA communications and materials.
- Promote the updated Explore Guide to residents and visitors.
- Increase GSCA's presence on social media outlets.
- Continue to support departmental, GSCA Foundation, and partner group needs and ensure effective communications that increases public awareness and engagement.
- Update GSCA's website to comply with branding guidelines, key messaging and *Conservation Authorities Act* requirements.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA's social media content reached over 100,000 people this year.
- The GSCA website saw close to 125,000 visitors and over 2,700,000 page visits in 2021.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The Environmental Education program strives to increase environmental awareness, inspire a sense of responsibility, and promote conservation through a variety of programming available across the GSCA watershed.

INTERESTING FACTS

- The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario have shown that intentional outdoor education programming has countless physical, emotional, and social benefits for participants.
- In 2021, GSCA received \$3000 in grant funding from Enbridge Gas Inc. to support environmental education.





2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Began development of the GSCA Summer Day Camp Return to Operation Plan (unfortunately, day camps were cancelled due to COVID-19).
- Participated in Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority's virtual field trip on the importance of the Great Lakes where we highlighted the GSCA watershed, discussed dams, and explained how fishways and fish ladders work. This program targeted grades 8 – 10 science, geography, and history curriculums.
- Developed a virtual experiential learning program with the Forestry Department for a SK/grade 1 class at Hepworth Public School. This programming explored career options at a conservation authority, advertising, and forest health.
- Judged the virtual 2021 Bluewater Junior Science Fair.
- Upgraded the popular Augmented Reality Sandbox Educational Tool with the support of a grant from Enbridge Gas Inc.
- Promoted ongoing guided hikes with the Friends of Hibou.
- Assisted in facilitating programming between the Inglis Falls Arboretum Alliance and a local Forest School that will share knowledge about planting seeds, special features of trees, and how to ID trees in the fall/ winter with no leaves.

2022 FOCUS

- Provide GSCA Summer Day Camp programming after a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19.
- Hire an Education Programmer to assist in planning and programming for day camp and other education services.
- Explore opportunities to expand our educational offerings and facilities.
- Establish the pillars and purpose of GSCA's environmental education program to be used as a guideline in program development.
- Promote environmental education at conservation authority and community events.
- Continue to build partnerships and investigate grant funding to leverage, expand, and enrich environmental education opportunities.
- Provide departmental support to create environmental education materials.



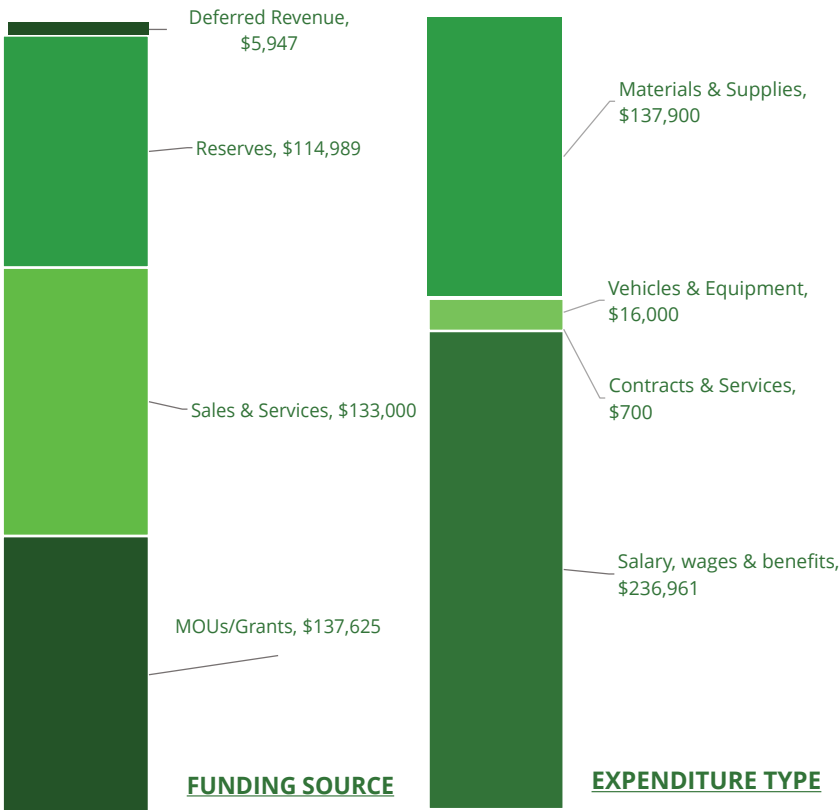
FORESTRY

GSCA’s Forestry Department sustainably manages the forests on all GSCA lands throughout Grey and Bruce Counties and offers a range of services, affordable trees, and professional expertise to private landowners. The delivery of these programs and services ensures that the 8 municipalities across GSCA’s watershed will continue to receive the benefits that forests and treed areas provide, such as increasing wildlife habitat and connectivity; reducing impacts of severe weather events; and improving soil retention and water quality.

In recent years, a dramatic reduction in marketable timber resources is causing challenges for revenue within this department. Forestry is seeing marginal increases in wages associated with the Salary Compensation Review and COLA, however there is a reduction in available revenues. Although staff are working to remedy the shortfall in revenue through efficiencies and additional work, it is proposed that funding from the Forestry Reserve, generated during more lucrative years, is used to offset the funding deficit.

This department does not utilize levy funding.

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$391,561





GSCA FORESTRY

This program manages forests on GSCA lands to be healthy, diverse ecosystems that provide ecological, social, cultural, and economic benefits to the communities that GSCA serves. As part of this process, staff identify areas with special or rare habitats; natural and cultural heritage features; species at risk; and invasive species in order to make informed decisions that ensure the long-term health of forests on GSCA lands. Harvesting trees is an important part of GSCA's forest management, which keeps forests healthy by mimicking natural disturbances that create suitable habitats for trees to regenerate. Harvesting trees also generates revenue for GSCA, supports the local economy, and is essential in the production of forest products that are a sustainable alternative to non-renewable materials.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Continued to release Emerald ash borer (EAB) parasitic wasps in an effort to slow the spread of EAB that are threatening our ash trees. This year, in partnership with Natural Resource Canada (NRCan) and the Canadian Forest Service (CFS), over 4,000 wasps have been released, including two species.
- Completed three sustainable harvest operations, including 2 plantations (200 acres) and are currently working on 1 hardwood stand (150 acres).
- Received two donations from private donors for tree planting on GSCA lands to offset their carbon footprints.
- Developed and are currently implementing a Forest Management Strategy to specifically address ash trees and the impact of EAB.
- Updated the Wood Products Tendering Policy to reduce red tape.
- Completed the measurement of growth and yield research plots with assistance of MNRF.



2022 FOCUS

- Complete an Invasive Species Strategy that will help guide future invasive species control work on GSCA lands.
- Develop a report that outlines potential revenue streams for the Forestry Department.
- Carry out forest management activities on GSCA properties including: inventories, tree marking, property inspections, harvest inspections, and harvest tenders.

INTERESTING FACTS

- The Forestry department sustainably manages over 5,600 hectares (14,000 acres) of forested land owned by GSCA.
- GSCA is a founding member of the Bruce Grey Forest Festival! This event promotes the wise use of forest resources and educates over 800 grade 7 students annually in a natural forest setting.
- GSCA's Forestry department has hosted many co-op students who are interested in pursuing post-secondary education in an environmental field.



GREY SAUBLE FORESTRY SERVICE

The Grey Sauble Forestry Service provides ethical, affordable, and sustainable forestry-related services to private landowners; enables good forest management practices; and increases forest cover throughout the GSCA watershed. These services include tree planting services; Forest Management Plans; and the sale of affordable native trees and seedlings. Trees on private property provide numerous benefits to the landowner and the entire community, such as improved air and water quality; increased resilience to the impacts of flooding; and reduced household energy bills. The Grey Sauble Forestry Service program offers trees and planting services at a reduced rate through programs administered by GSCA. There are also tax incentives for people who engage GSCA to develop a Managed Forest Plan for their property, making it a lucrative option for landowners.





2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Planted over 81,000 trees this spring, creating 54 hectares (133 acres) of new forests.
- Secured over \$150,000 in grant funding for landowners to offset the cost of tree planting projects.
- With support from Information Services, developed a new tree order pickup process and will be exploring the implementation of additional efficiencies.
- Solidified a new partnership to receive grant funding to offset the landowner contribution of tree planting projects.
- Sold over 29,000 seedlings and over 1,800 landscape trees to 250 clients through the pre-order tree program.
- Planted trees at no cost for landowners impacted by an Enbridge gas line.
- Ensured the sustainable management of over 400 ha (>988 acres) of forest through the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP).
- Began creating a video that explains the tree planting process.
- Developed a fact sheet on the *Lymantria dispar* (LDD) moth to educate the public on this invasive species.
- Expanded our partnership with the Bruce Trail to include tree planting efforts.

2022 FOCUS

- Plant 55,000 trees throughout the GSCA watershed.
- Create/update Managed Forest Plans for private landowners with a target of 400 hectares (988 acres).
- Produce plantation management content for the GSCA website to educate the public about sustainable forestry.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Planting trees can help reduce heating and cooling costs at home.
- Trees are a great way to make use of marginal or less productive acreage.
- Implementing a Forest Management Plan through the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program can reduce your property taxes!
- Trees planted along watercourses (riparian area) can improve water quality, especially when combined with livestock restriction fencing.
- Trees planted along fencerows as windbreaks can reduce soil erosion, especially when combined with cover crops on agricultural lands.



CONSERVATION LANDS

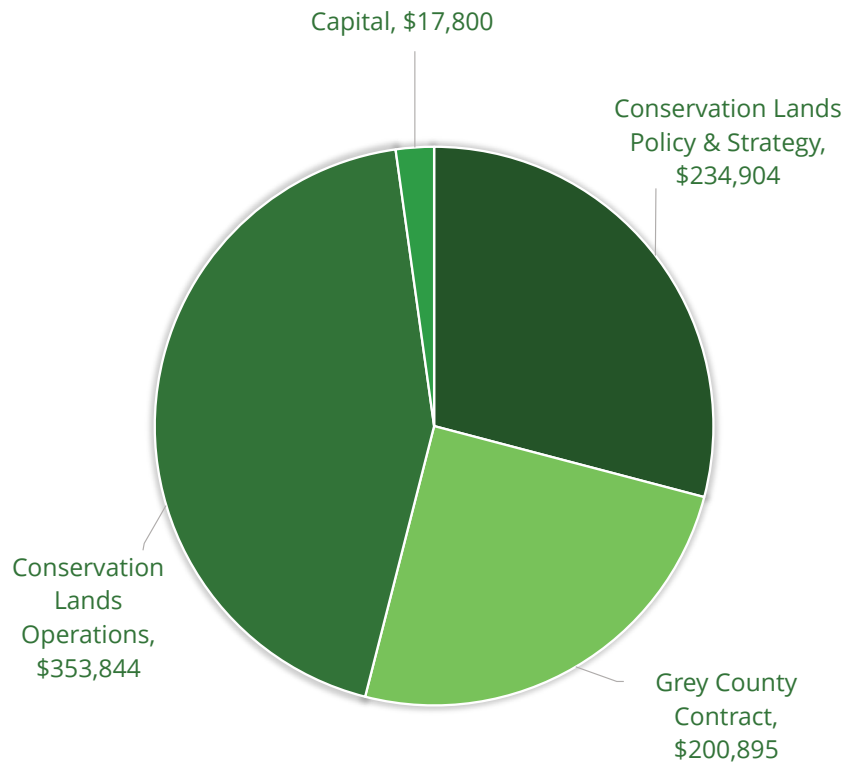
GSCA has been actively protecting the natural landscape of Grey and Bruce Counties for over 60 years through property acquisition and sustainable land management efforts. GSCA lands have been divided into three classifications based on the reason for acquisition, conditions on title, or management objectives, which include conservation areas, management areas, and nature preserves. A preliminary evaluation of GSCA's landholdings determined that 72-million dollars of ecosystem service benefits are provided annually to residents and visitors by over 11,000 hectares of land and 172 km of trails managed by GSCA. These services include recreation opportunities, flood and drought mitigation, climate regulation, wildlife benefits, and carbon sequestration, just to name a few!

The expense side of the budget for Conservation Lands Policy and Strategy appears to be increasing substantially from 2021 to 2022. However, this is predominantly a draw from reserves to cover anticipated legal costs associated with an ongoing property issue that is expected to be resolved early in 2022. Nominal increases in wages are also noted. Surplus will be utilized to slightly offset the impacts of the Salary Compensation Review.

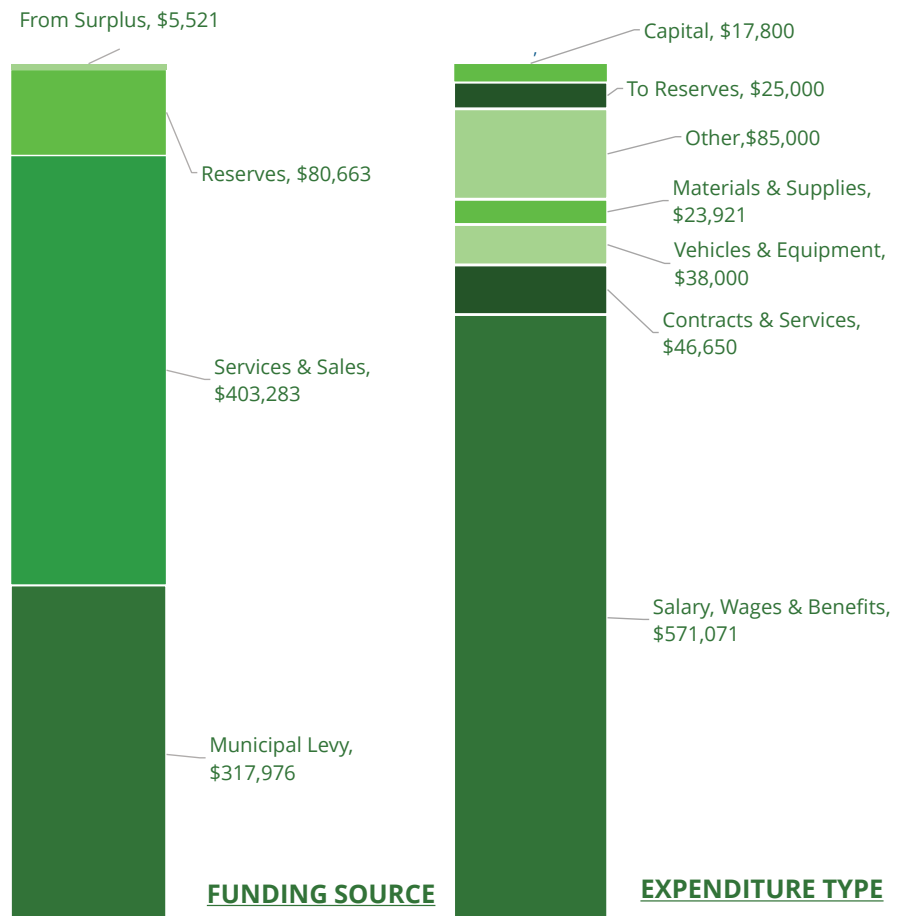
As staff dedicate more time to the fulfilment of the Grey County management contract, an increase in expenses and associated funding is required. Staff will be working directly with Grey County to finalize this component of the budget.

2021 has seen record revenues from GSCA's paid parking program. GSCA has also experienced increasing pressures on our properties and the resources of our staff to manage these properties. Most notable changes to this department are associated with increased wages to cover the additional staff time. Overall, the levy in this department has remained generally static. Surplus will be utilized to slightly offset the impacts of the Salary Compensation Review. The remaining surplus will be earmarked for the Lands Capital Reserve to offset the cost of future capital renewals.

CONSERVATION LANDS



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$807,442





GSCA LANDS, POLICY & STRATEGY

The Lands, Policy & Strategy Department is actively working to manage, utilize, and leverage GSCA lands and services to the benefit of GSCA, the 8 member municipalities, and the communities throughout GSCA's watershed and beyond.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Investigated alternative parking apps and payment methods for GSCA properties where parking is enforced.
- Implemented new parking fees at Christie Beach Conservation Area in partnership with the Municipality of Meaford and Town of the Blue Mountains.
- Collaborated with the Optimist Club of Sydenham and District, Walker Aggregates and our Operations Staff to install an inclusive playground at Hibou Conservation Area.
- Categorized all GSCA's properties as per the Risk Management Guideline.
- Issued an RFP for the Administration Centre renewal.
- Completed ecological inventories at Spirit Rock Conservation Area, which included hosting GSCA's first BioBlitz.
- Worked with willing landowners and organizations on land securement initiatives.
- Collaborated with Forestry to ensure our properties remained in the appropriate tax programs, and submitted nine new applications to the Conservation Lands Tax Incentive Program.
- Developed agreements and leases with various user groups, agricultural leases and individuals using GSCA properties.
- Liaised with Nature Conservancy of Canada on an invasive species program for the Saugeen Peninsula.
- Supported Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces Systems as a member of the NEPOSS Council.
- Developed and implemented a trail maintenance and inspection schedule for Grey County Forests, which also included conducting maintenance such as: blazing trails, re-building trails, and pruning.
- Implemented the Forest Management By-law on behalf of Grey County and provided input on their revised Forest Management By-law.
- Addressed complaints and responded to inquiries from the public and neighbours regarding management of multiple GSCA properties.



2022 FOCUS

- Begin an overarching Conservation Authority Land Strategy as per the *Conservation Authorities Act* regulations.
- Proceed with the Administration Centre renewal project.
- Complete the Eugenia Falls Conservation Area Management Plan and begin work on a management plan for Spirit Rock Conservation Area.
- Begin an ecological inventory of West Rocks Conservation Area.
- Develop a natural heritage land protection and acquisition approach, including mapping of core areas and linkages.
- Enhance partnerships and education with First Nations and Metis.
- Proceed with a carbon credit feasibility study.
- Manage GSCA property leases, agreements and easements.
- Continue to fulfill Grey County Forest Management and By-law Compliance contract.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA properties continue to drive local tourism with over 200,000 visitors per year.
- COVID-19 related travel restrictions resulted in a significant increase in property users this summer.
- GSCA partners with many community, municipal, provincial and federal partners to enhance green spaces for everyone to enjoy!



CONSERVATION LANDS OPERATIONS

This department oversees the maintenance of all GSCA lands and associated assets, including buildings, facilities, dams, and trails.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Operations staff maintain approximately 172 km of trails on GSCA properties as well as Grey County trails, including the Rail Trail.
- Parking fees generated approximately \$240,000 in 2021 to help offset the costs associated with maintaining popular conservation areas that draw in 100s of thousands of visitors to Grey and Bruce Counties every year.



2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Grew the Park Ambassador Program and expanded Gate Staff services to Spirit Rock Conservation Area and Bruce's Caves Conservation Area.
- Successfully implemented a new cashless parking payment system.
- Exceeded parking revenue targets.
- Coordinated septic system upgrades at Inglis Falls Conservation Area that resulted in significant savings.
- Removed the cracked vault and dated privy from Spirit Rock Conservation Area and designed and installed a new accessible privy.
- Designed and installed new gatehouses at Spirit Rock, Old Baldy, and Eugenia Falls Conservation Areas.
- Completed bathroom upgrades at Bruces Caves and Eugenia Falls Conservation Areas.
- Designed and constructed a new safety fence at Inglis Falls Conservation Area.
- Worked with Lands Staff and GSCA partners to implement property updates, including the installation of a new playground at Hibou Conservation Area, upgrades to boardwalks, grading of the access road to Bruce's Caves Conservation Area, and a new trail system at Feversham Gorge & Madeline Graydon Conservation Area.
- Completed major capital improvements to stoplog structures at Clendenan Conservation Area and Berford Lake.
- Designed and modified Rankin Dam to update the install and removal process.
- Completed interior renovations to GSCA Administration Centre to improve meeting spaces and the public reception area.



2022 FOCUS

- Install new entrance signs at various GSCA properties.
- Investigate expanding the Park Ambassador Program to other properties.
- Conduct stone repointing at Inglis Falls, Eugenia Falls, Colpoy's Lookout and Spirit Rock Conservation Areas.
- Meet the net land use revenue budget target, including increased compliance enforcement.
- Review and implement options to expand the paid parking network.
- Update the Asset Management Plan information on property, fleet, and equipment capital assets for incorporation into the 2023 budget.



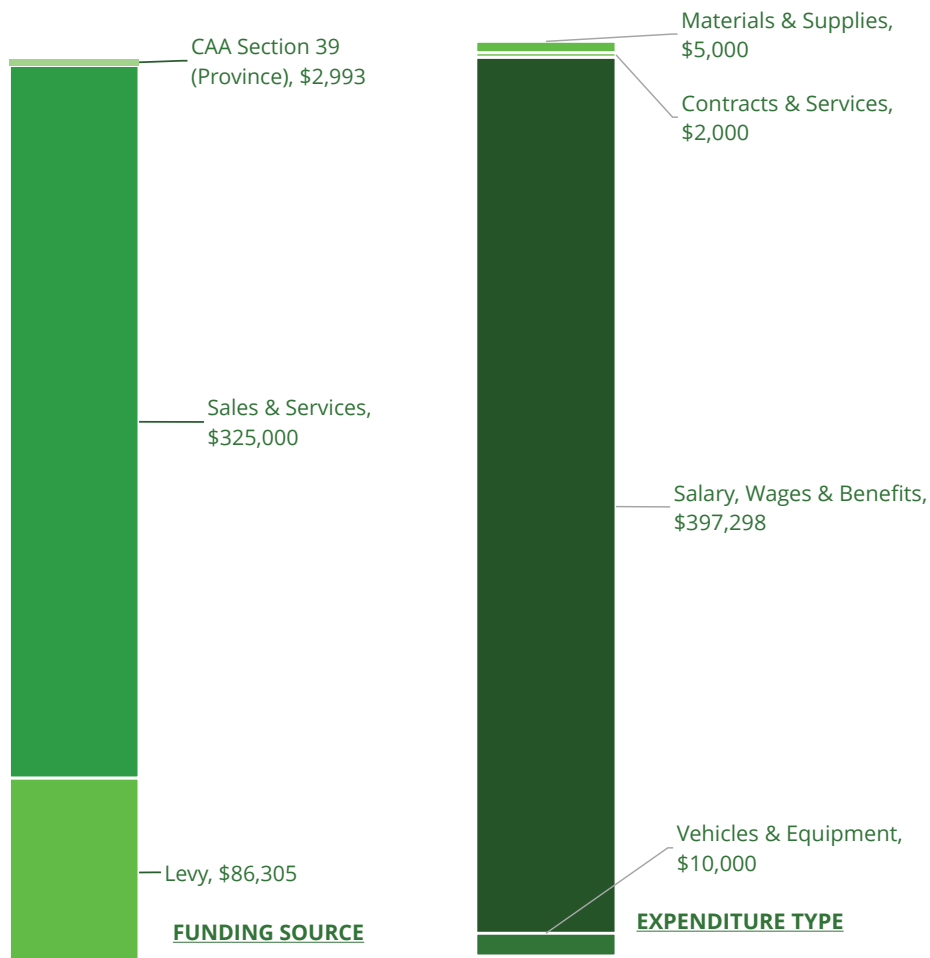
ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & REGULATIONS

The Environmental Planning department plays a specialized role in the land use planning and development process of Bruce County, Grey County, and the 8 lower tier municipalities across GSCA's watershed by providing expertise and input to these decision makers. This department is also the approval authority for applications submitted under Ontario Regulation 151/06: Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses. These services guide development in a sustainable manner, away from natural hazards, and assist in the protection of significant natural heritage features, water quality, and water quantity.



The 2022 Environmental Planning budget sees a nominal increase in both wages and in sales and services. It is expected that the implementation of the new service rates and fee structure may ultimately drive more revenue in this department than currently budgeted for. Levy increases in this department are nominal.

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$414,298





2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Responded to a record high volume of inquiries, planning applications and permit applications.
- Filled several staffing positions as a result of vacancies and retirement.
- Implemented changes to how the department receives communication digitally. This included an online inquiry form and digital permit application form, which is then directed to the appropriate staff for review and response.
- Provided a presentation to a group of real estate agents to communicate current departmental processes related to property transactions.
- Continued to participate in the Bruce County Natural Legacy Planning Advisory Committee to enhance natural heritage planning in Bruce County.
- New staff completed the Level 1 Provincial Offences Officer training in support of the Section 28 regulations.
- Worked towards resolving numerous development violations through restoration agreements and restoration permits.

2022 FOCUS

- Complete fee review with subsequent increase in departmental capacity to improve application review processes and timelines.
- Finalize service agreements and update as needed with partner municipalities.
- Continue to provide input and mapping for municipal planning documents.
- Strive for continued service excellence in the delivery of planning and permitting functions.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Over 630 submissions have been received through the online planning and permit inquiry form from April to October, 2021.

From January 1, 2021 to October 20, 2021, staff:

- Received and reviewed 192 Planning Act applications and 41 NEC applications.
- Completed 123 pre-consultations, regulation inquiries and site review letters.
- Received 413 permits under Ontario Regulation 151/06.

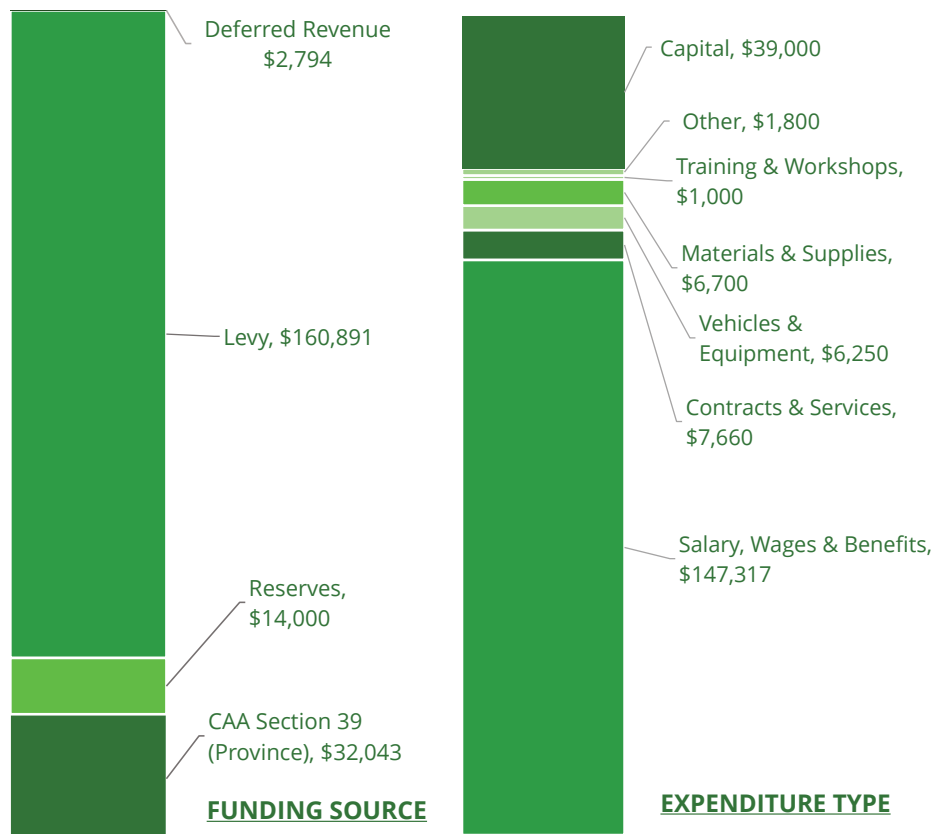


FLOOD FORECASTING & MANAGEMENT

GSCA works collaboratively with 8 local municipalities to ensure that proper planning and maintenance activities are in place to reduce the risk and potential impacts of flooding. Proactive monitoring and early flood warnings help prevent loss of life and allow people to take action in mitigating flood damage to public and private property.

The Flood Forecasting and Management budget remains largely unchanged from 2021 to 2022. Specific changes of note are associated with salary and wages. These increases across the department are associated with a greater allocation of staff time, as well as with the impacts of the Salary Compensation Review and COLA.

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$209,727





FLOOD FORECASTING & WARNING

Like all conservation authorities across the Province, GSCA maintains a flood forecasting and warning system for the 8 municipalities within its watershed boundary. The purpose of the system is to minimize flood damage and loss of life by providing residents of flood prone areas with advance warning of possible flood events. Through this program, staff work with local municipalities to develop a flood contingency plan; monitor water levels, precipitation and snow water concentration; and predict and communicate extreme water level changes. During times of drought, staff review watershed data and coordinate the local Low Water Response Team.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Maintained 8 precipitation gauges and 7 snow survey sites.
- Added 3 new water level gauges and maintained 16 existing water level gauges.
- Worked continuously to inform municipal partners and community members of high wave action and flood warnings.
- Added 3 new online weather stations to GSCA's existing network of 18 active stations (Wunderground Network).
- Recruited 3 new CoCoRaHS rain gauge volunteers, totaling 22 active participants.
- Linked snow melt models to flow model to better predict spring runoff conditions.



2022 FOCUS

- Continue to maintain a flood forecasting and warning system to minimize flood damage and loss of life by providing residents of flood prone areas with advance warning of possible flood events.
- Continue to develop real-time flow and snow melt models.
- Install more water level gauges in flood prone areas.
- Install additional online weather stations to fill data holes within the GSCA watershed.
- Encourage more volunteers to sign up for CoCoRaHS rain gauges in order to increase available data.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Three live river cams are available for viewing on the GSCA website. All water level, flow and precipitation data is available on GSCA's website.
- GSCA's "Watershed Conditions" web map gets more than 5,000 hits per year.
- A free web tool (windy.com) is used to forecast high waves for lakeshore residents in the GSCA watershed.



FLOOD & EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES & OTHER DAMS

This program manages, monitors, and maintains dams owned by GSCA and existing erosion control structures that were originally partially funded by MNRF.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Inspected 8 dams owned by GSCA including two flood control structures.
- Conducted inspections on 11 erosion control structures previously installed through partnerships with GSCA, municipalities and the Province.
- Continued phased repairs of gabion baskets at Indian Falls Conservation area.
- Completed regular dam adjustments, including installs, removals, plugs, and beaver debris elimination.
- Completed a review of Owen Sound Mill Dam and updated the operational plan for the dam.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Most of GSCA's dams are drawn down for the winter to prepare for the spring freshet.
- Clendenan Dam is designed to capture sheet ice to reduce ice jamming and flooding in Clarksburg.
- GSCA has real-time water level gauges at 3 dams, including Rankin Dam, Skinner's Marsh Dam, and the Owen Sound Mill Dam.

2022 FOCUS

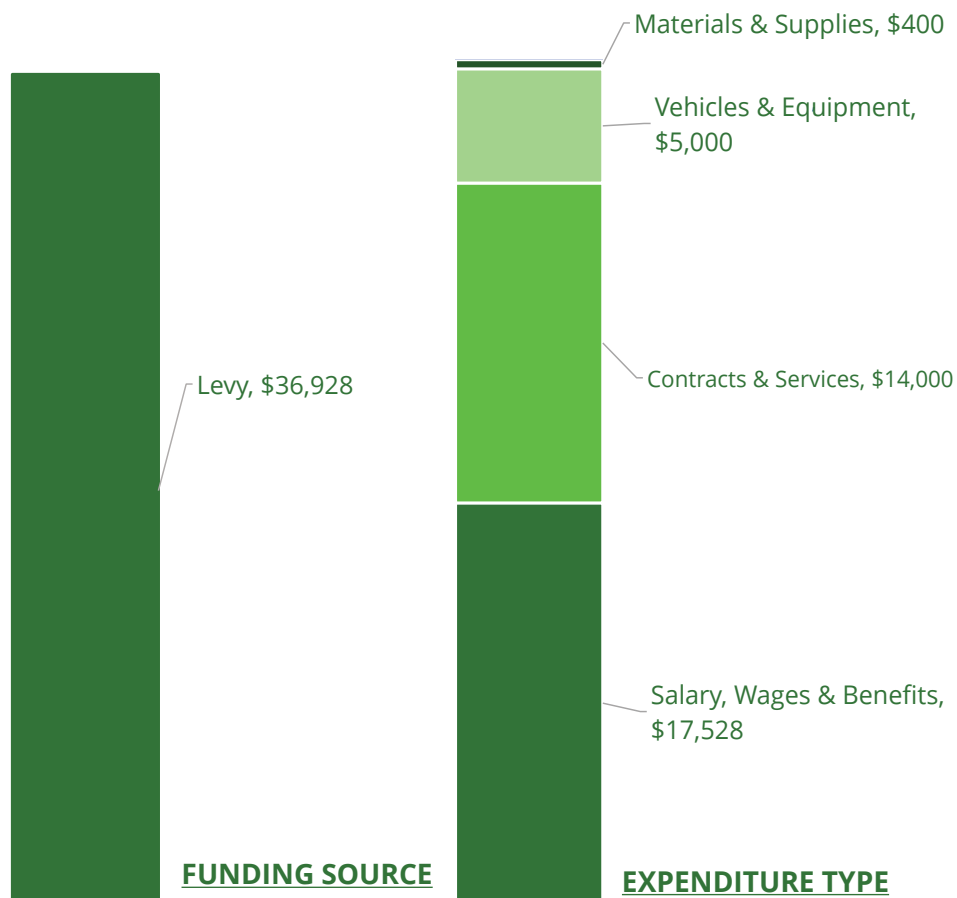
- Continue to maintain dam structures and manage water levels for both recreation and flood control.
- Ensure erosion control structures continue to function as designed.
- Continue repairs to the gabion baskets at Indian Falls Conservation Area.
- Continue to review and update Operational Plans for our dams.



WATER QUALITY MONITORING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

The Watershed Monitoring and Management budget remains largely unchanged from 2021 to 2022.

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$36,928





MONITORING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

This program collects valuable, long-term watershed data that is the foundation of GSCA's Watershed Report Cards. Various water quality parameters such as E. coli, total phosphorus and chlorides are tested on surface water samples collected throughout the watershed. This data is made available on GSCA's website. Benthic macroinvertebrates or "stream bugs" are collected to help monitor changes in the biological communities of our rivers and creeks over time. Groundwater wells are also monitored annually to ensure groundwater levels and water quality are stable. This data has also been used by several agencies to make assessments on Great Lakes health and guide decisions such as informing small drinking water systems, risk assessments, and best practices for winter road salt application.



2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Sampled 35 water sites (including 6 new sites) 8 times and sampled 15 benthic sites to support GSCA's Watershed Report Card evaluations.
- Completed two more Watershed Health Reviews - Pottawatomie River and Upper Sauble River.

2022 FOCUS

- Continue to collect valuable watershed data that supports Watershed Report Cards and stewardship efforts.
- Update water quality monitoring results with new data and post online.
- Complete 2 Watershed Health Reviews.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA does all its benthic identification in-house to the lowest practical level (i.e. genus and species).
- Surface water quality data is available on GSCA's website.
- Most of the Provincial surface water sites have data dating back to 2002, whereas the additional GSCA sites began in 2012.
- The Provincial surface water site at Sauble Falls has water quality data dating back to 1970!



STEWARDSHIP

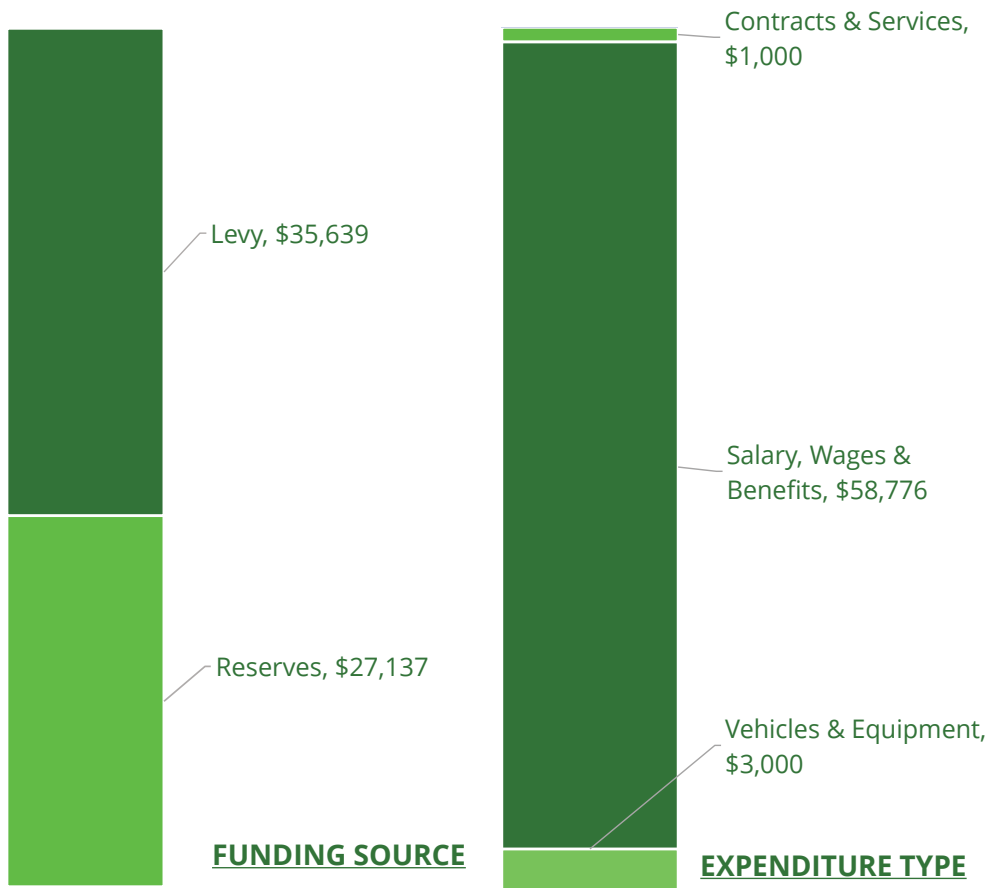
The focus of the Stewardship program is to inspire and enable others to become stewards of their land by making environmentally conscious decisions and implementing projects that will provide positive environmental benefits. The Stewardship program secures external grant dollars to support landowners with projects that improve water quality, promote soil health, and restore wildlife habitat. Types of projects include livestock exclusion fencing, wetland creation, or winter cover crops on agricultural land. The Stewardship program also works in partnership with other watershed organizations such as ALUS Grey Bruce, Stewardship Grey Bruce, and Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association.

Invasive species monitoring and management is another important area of the Stewardship Program. Invasive Phragmites has been cut on several GSCA shoreline properties in the past 3 years and baseline data will be used to target future management efforts. Collaboration with community groups in Oliphant and Lake Eugenia to control invasive Phragmites has been a major success story for this program.



The 2022 Stewardship budget sees a marked decrease in materials and supplies and the associated grant funding. Staff are working to secure this funding and may need to reflect it in-year as grants are received. There is no levy increase proposed in this department. Surplus from 2021 is proposed to carry forward into 2022, as a result of grant funding distribution in 2021.

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES
TOTAL \$ 62,776





2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Controlled 3+ acres of invasive Wild Chervil growing along GSCA property, which had the potential to impact agriculture production.
- Established the GSCA Agricultural Advisory Committee to build relationships within the agricultural community.
- Completed a Watershed Erosion Assessment Analysis to identify low to severe risk potential.
- Updated GSCA's municipal drain data for the Healthy Lake Huron Drain Review.
- Completed an Agricultural Characteristics Report of the Sauble South subwatershed in conjunction with the Healthy Lake Huron partnership.
- Completed a Livestock Survey for beef producers to gain insight on industry pressures and sustainability feedback/needs.
- Delivered Phragmites cutters to 2 locations (Lake Eugenia & Oliphant) and managed approximately 1284m of shoreline.

INTERESTING FACTS

As a result of Stewardship funding:

- 11,000 trees were planted as riparian area or windbreaks.
- Approximately 1784m of livestock exclusion fencing was installed.
- 190 hectares (491 acres) of cover crops were planted.



2022 FOCUS

- Continue to seek stewardship funding to work with landowners and deliver stewardship projects that contribute to healthy watershed communities.
- Showcase the Watershed Report Card to the agricultural community and highlight how agricultural practices can positively impact the watershed.
- Establish relationships with businesses and organizations to help identify how the agricultural community can assist in implementing climate change mitigation goals.
- Seek further funding to ensure stewardship initiatives and practices continue to benefit and sustain our watershed through nature-based solutions.
- Continue to develop and work with Healthy Lake Huron to further build relationships with the agricultural community.
- Expand stewardship-related information on the GSCA website to include contractor lists and other resources for the public.

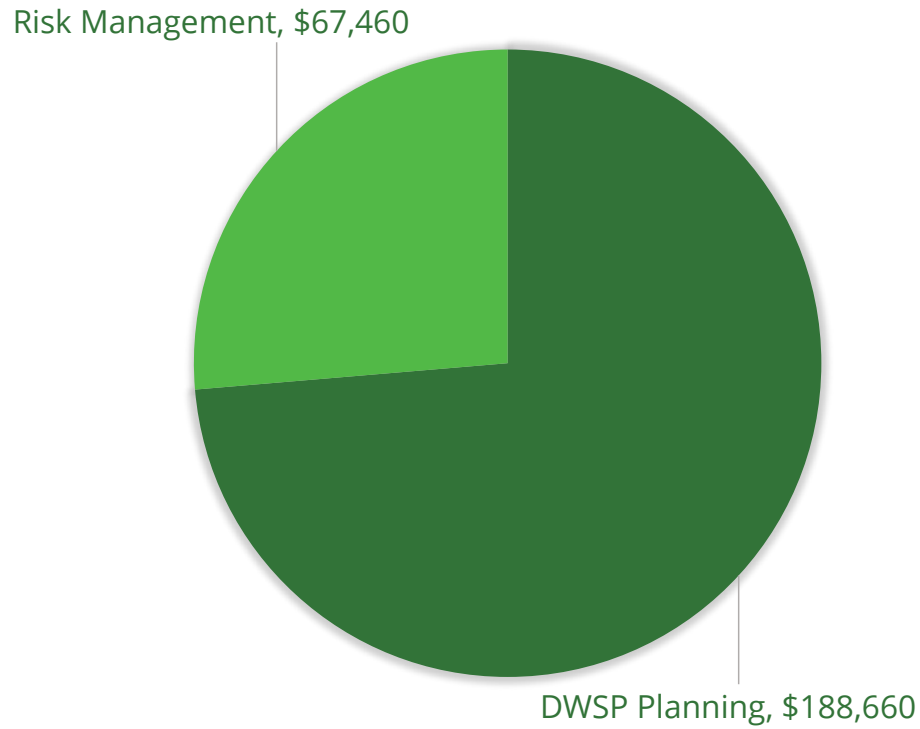


DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION

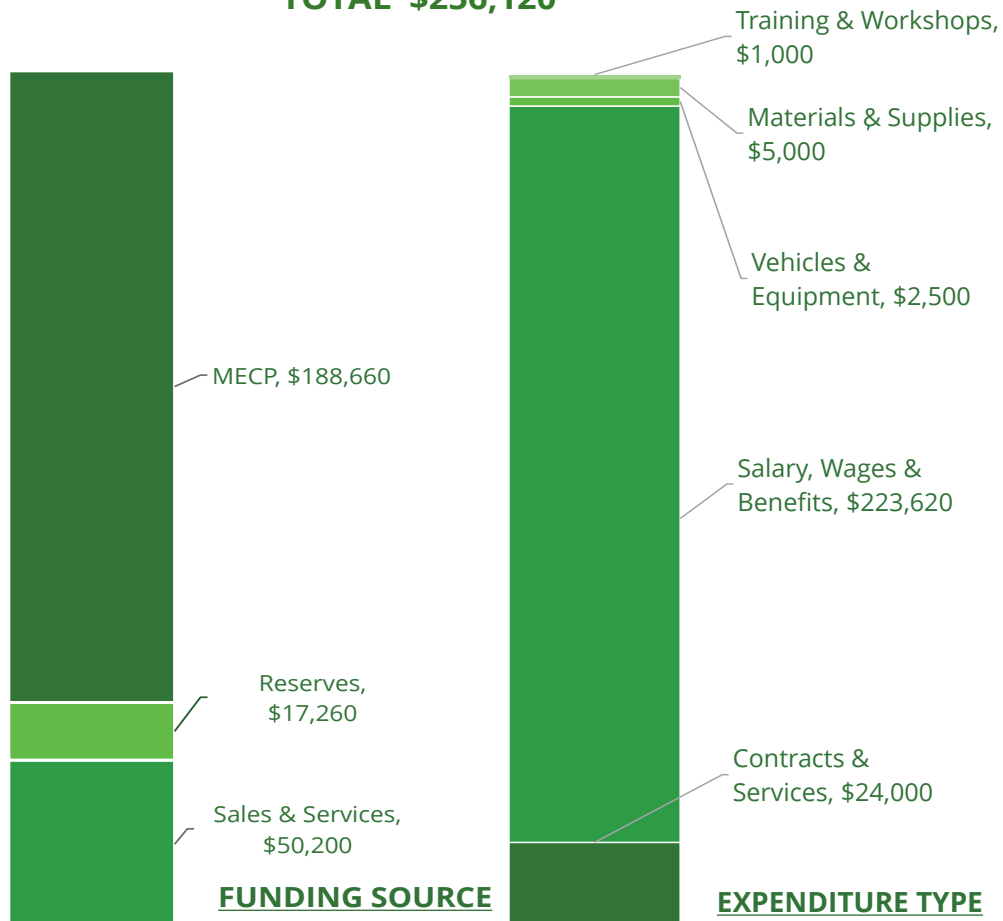
Water is critical to all aspects of life and it is important to ensure there is a safe and reliable source of water for all uses – now and in the future. Drinking Water Source Protection is a resource planning process that aims to keep sources of drinking water safe and usable.

The only notable change in Source Water Protection portion of the budget is to reflect changes with salary and wages. This program is funded through Provincial grant. There is no levy impact associated with this budget. Changes in the Source Water Risk Management program are associated with a nominal increase in salary and wages and a modest increase in contracts & services. This program operates on a fee for service basis as established in agreements with participating municipalities. There is no levy impact associated with this budget.

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$256,120





DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PLANNING

The Source Water Protection Program ensures a sustainable and safe source of clean drinking water to residents, within the Saugeen, Grey Sauble, and Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region, by meeting legislative requirements within the *Clean Water Act* and ensuring policies in the Source Protection Plan are implemented.

INTERESTING FACTS

- The Source Protection Plan that came into effect in July 2016 includes 119 policies to address 22 prescribed drinking water threats.
- 100% of the policies that address significant drinking water threats have been implemented.
- To-date over 150 Risk Management Plans were established in the Source Protection Region (since July 2016) and 183 Inspections have been carried out by designated Risk Management Officials/Inspectors.
- The Source Protection Committee is certain that the significant progress achieved to-date is a direct result of provincial funding dedicated to source water protection.



2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed the annual report to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks with the noted achievement of implementing 100% of the Source Protection Plan policies by the required deadline of July 2021.
- Submitted the draft Source Protection Plan amendments to the Ministry and other affected stakeholders for review, as directed by Ministerial Order under Section 36 of the *Clean Water Act*.
- Currently conducting consultation efforts on Source Protection Plan amendments to address any Technical Rule changes or gaps. The timeline for completion is tentatively Fall 2021.

2022 FOCUS

- Implement the proposed amendments to the Source Protection Plan, with affected landowners, including salt storage and application threats and fuel storage activities in sensitive areas.
- Complete amendments to the source protection plan to include new drinking water systems, as required by Regulation 205 of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

* The Source Water Protection budget and achievements apply to the fiscal year (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022).



DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION RISK MANAGEMENT

Grey Sauble Conservation staff have the designated responsibility for the delivery of Risk Management services on behalf of 14 municipalities across Grey and Bruce Counties. These services include duties specified under the *Clean Water Act* for the development of Risk Management Plans, screening land-use planning applications, inspection, enforcement and annual reporting requirements.

2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- 4 Risk Management Plans were completed, and 38 Land Use Screening Notices were issued.
- Currently in the final year of the established 5-year timeline for implementation of significant drinking water threat policies.
- There have been 187 inspections carried out or planned by a Grey Sauble Risk Management Official/Inspector for prohibited or regulated activities to date.
- There is a 100% compliance rate with the Risk Management Plans established in our source protection region.
- Negotiated Risk Management Service Agreements with partner municipalities.

2022 FOCUS

- Negotiate outstanding Risk Management Plans.
- Conduct ongoing restricted land use planning screenings as required and support communication efforts with municipalities on planning related issues.
- Implement a Cost Recovery Plan for Risk Management Services.

INTERESTING FACTS

- The following municipalities are supported by Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Risk Management Department: South Bruce Peninsula, South Bruce, West Grey, Kincardine, Saugeen Shores, Brockton, Arran-Elderslie, Blue Mountains, Georgian Bluffs, Chatsworth, Grey Highlands, Owen Sound, Meaford, and Northern Bruce Peninsula.

* The Source Water Protection budget and achievements apply to the fiscal year (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022).



237897 Inglis Falls Road, RR4. Owen Sound, Ontario, N4K 5N6
explore@greysauble.on.ca | greysauble.on.ca | 519-376-3076

If you require this document in an alternate format,
please contact us at 519-376-3076.