



Grey Sauble
CONSERVATION

2026 | DRAFT BUDGET
COMPANION
REPORT

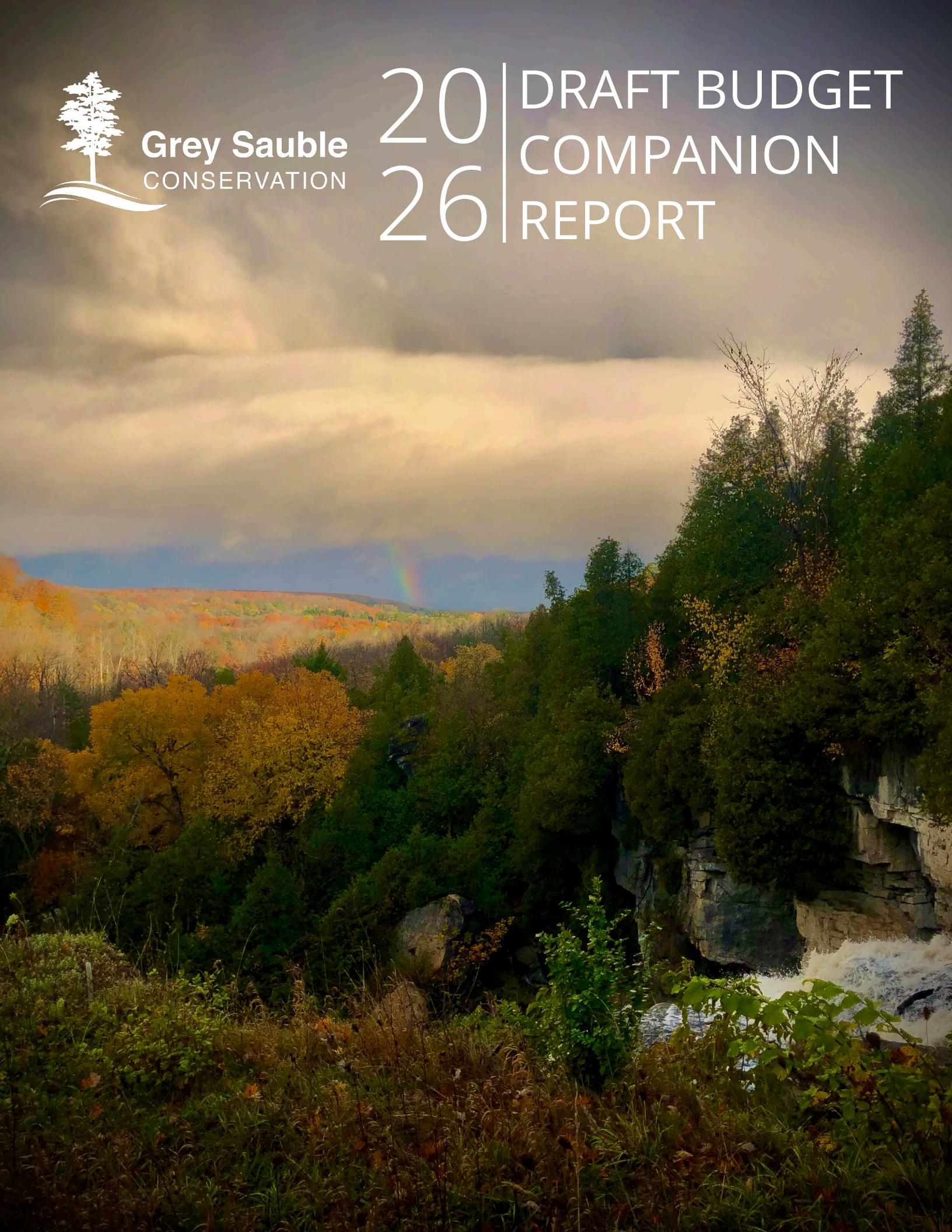




TABLE OF CONTENTS

GSCA PROFILE	1
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	2
MISSION & VISION	3
2026 BUDGET SUMMARY	4
2026 OPERATING BUDGET BY SERVICE AREA	5
2026 CAPITAL BUDGET BY SERVICE AREA	6
 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 - 21
GSCA Forestry	22 - 23
Grey Sauble Forestry Service	24 - 25



CONSERVATION LANDS **26 - 27**

GSCA Lands, Policy & Strategy	28 - 29
Conservation Lands Operations	30 - 32

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & REGULATIONS **33 - 35**

WATER & ENGINEERING SERVICES **36 - 37**

Flood Forecasting & Warning	38 - 39
Flood & Erosion Control Structures	
& Other Dams	40

WATER QUALITY MONITORING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT **41**

Monitoring & Watershed Management	42 - 43
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STEWARDSHIP **44 - 47**

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION **48 - 49**

Drinking Water Source Protection Planning	50 - 51
Drinking Water Source Protection Risk Management	52 - 53



**ADMINISTRATION
SERVICES** | 3.9 FTEs
OPERATING \$820,001
CAPITAL \$190,118

**INFORMATION
SERVICES** | 3.9 FTEs
OPERATING \$576,761
CAPITAL \$25,072

**CONSERVATION
LANDS** | 8.7 FTEs
OPERATING \$1,069,240
CAPITAL \$24,980

**DRINKING WATER
PROTECTION** | 2.2 FTEs
\$333,060

**PLANNING &
PERMITS** | 5.7 FTEs
\$624,591

FORESTRY | 2 FTEs
OPERATING \$436,260
CAPITAL: \$2000

**WATER & ENGINEERING
SERVICES**
| 1.3 FTEs
OPERATING \$200,620
CAPITAL \$30,900

WATER QUALITY
| .25 FTEs
\$50,239

STEWARDSHIP
| 1 FTE
\$135,544

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 2025 - 2035 STRATEGIC PLAN IDENTIFIES SEVERAL GOALS THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE REALIZATION OF GSCA'S VISION.



Goal 1: Achieve Organizational Excellence



Goal 2: Effectively Monitor and Manage the Risk of Natural Hazards



Goal 3: Enhance GSCA Land Management



Goal 4: Improve Watershed Health



Goal 5: Strengthen Environmental Education and Communication

VISION

A vibrant watershed, supported by GSCA, where ecosystems thrive, and communities are healthy safe and prosperous.

MISSION

To champion a healthy and safe watershed through innovative conservation efforts, sound planning and inspiring education initiatives, now and in the future.





2026 BUDGET SUMMARY

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) continues to focus on delivering excellence in corporate management and client services through the dedication of our experienced staff and the programs we provide to our communities. Our approach emphasizes partnership building, strategic thinking, and open communication to foster a healthy, safe, and diverse region.

The year 2025 was transformative for GSCA, marked by several major initiatives. We completed an Asset Assessment and Management Plan and introduced a three-year budget framework to strengthen transparency and accountability. Significant capital work included the full renovation of our Administration Centre, while strategic priorities advanced with the finalization of our Strategic Plan. Operational improvements were also achieved through the replacement of flood monitoring equipment across the watershed and accessibility upgrades at Inglis Falls Conservation Area, including a complete washroom renovation. Environmental stewardship remained a priority, with extensive removal of invasive phragmites and the successful implementation of a turtle nest protection and education program that engaged numerous volunteers and community partners.

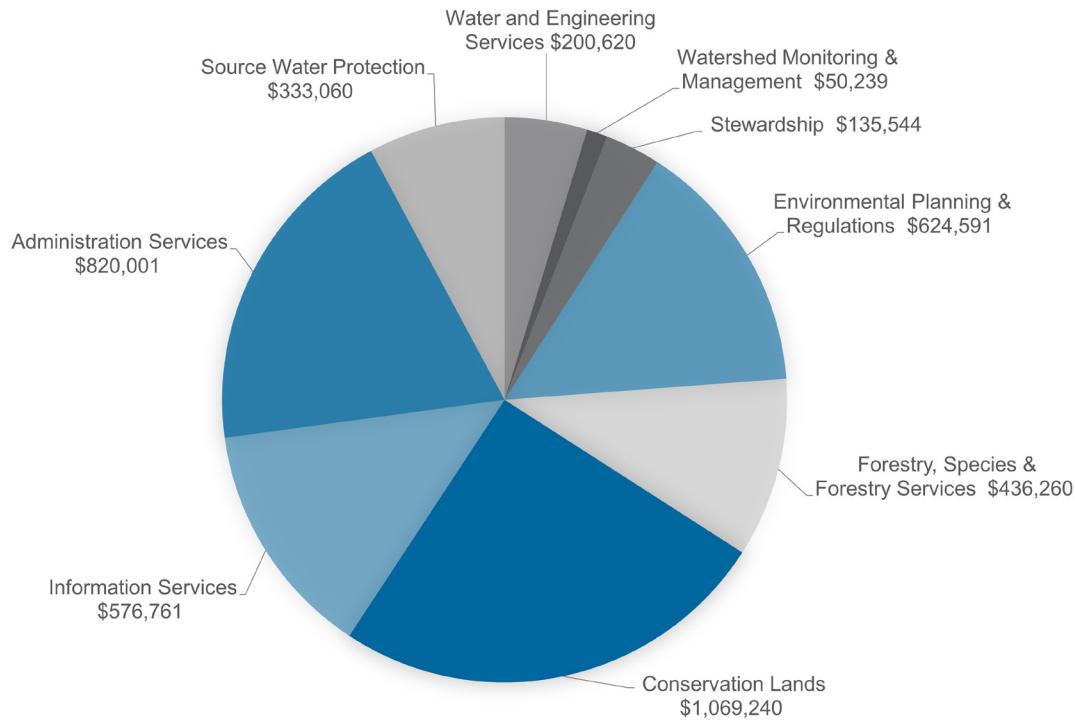
GSCA remains committed to responsible financial management. To reduce reliance on municipal levies, we actively pursue self-generated revenues through fee-for-service programs such as paid parking, planning and permit fees, and our popular day camp. For 2026, municipal apportionment represents approximately 44.3% of operating costs, while provincial transfer payments for Drinking Water Source Protection and Natural Hazard Management account for 6.7%. The remaining 49% is derived from self-generated revenues, donations, and reserves.

The proposed 2026 operating budget totals \$4.25 million. Revenue changes include a modest increase in municipal levy and higher revenues from agreements and service fees. On the expense side, increases are primarily related to salaries, contracts, and materials, particularly for non-levy programs such as tree planting and education initiatives. The capital budget for 2026 decreases significantly compared to 2025, as last year's Administration Centre renovation inflated capital spending. The 2026 capital budget is nearly aligned with 2024 levels.

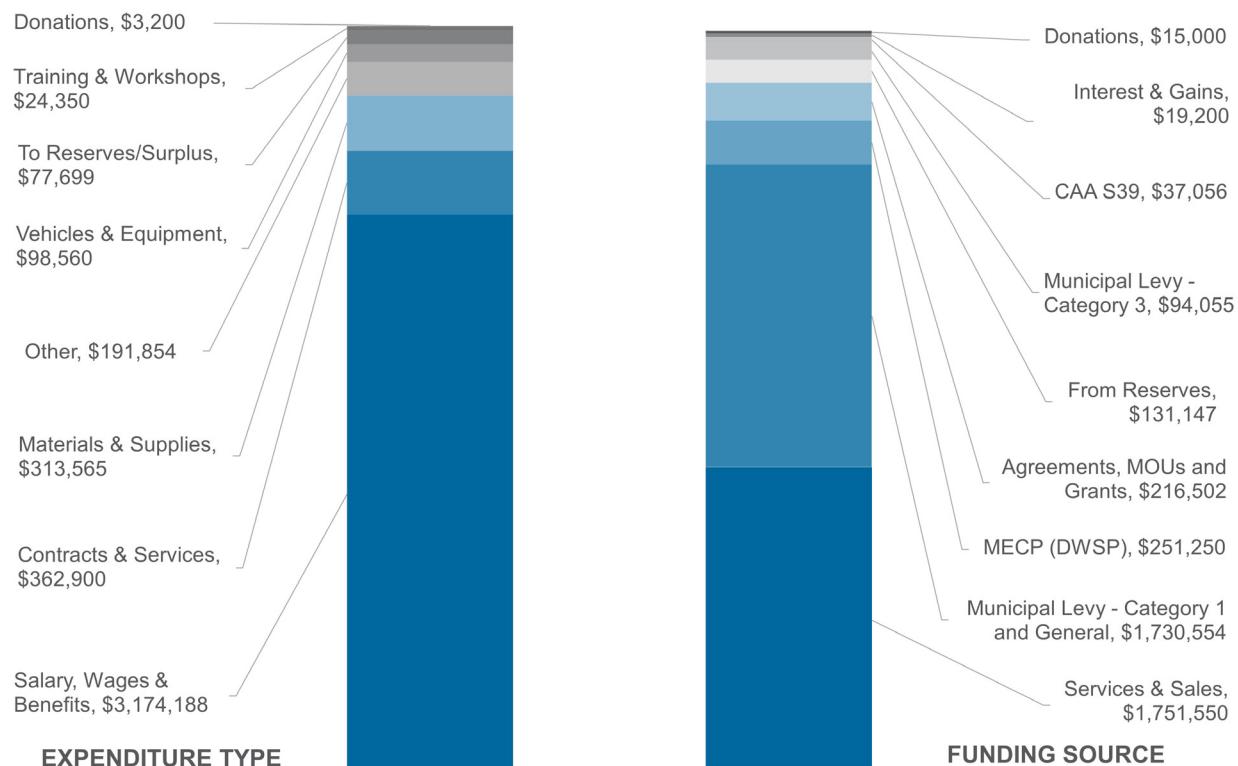
The proposed levy increase for 2026 is \$77,737, representing a 3.89% increase over the 2025 approved budget and a 1.68% increase over the change in modified current value assessment. This budget reflects GSCA's ongoing commitment to balancing fiscal responsibility with service excellence, ensuring sustainable operations while advancing watershed management and community engagement.

2026 OPERATING BUDGET BY SERVICE AREA

TOTAL BUDGET \$4,246,314

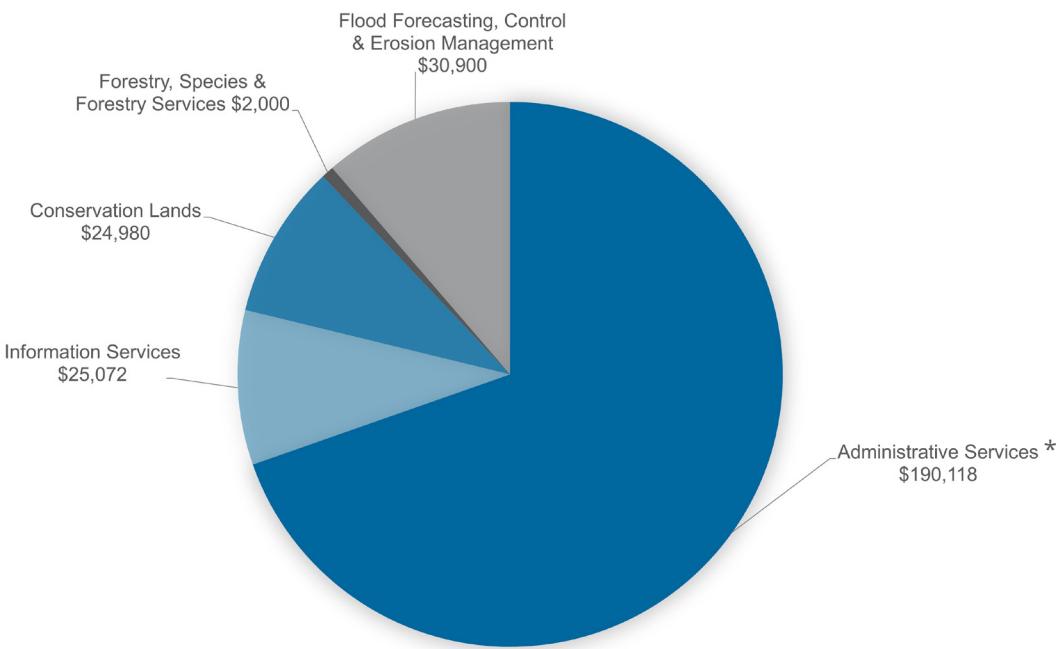


FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

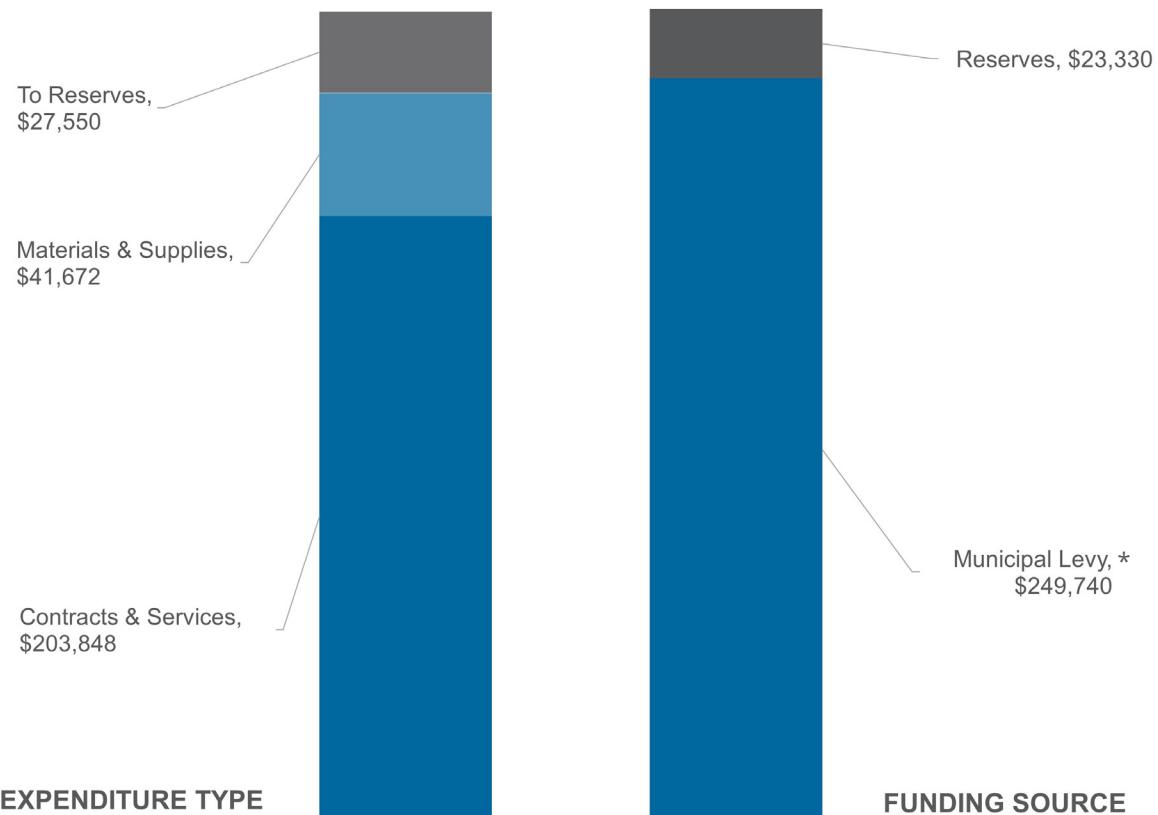


2026 CAPITAL BUDGET BY SERVICE AREA

TOTAL BUDGET \$273,070



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES



* \$190,118 is related to Administration Centre debt repayment.



ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

Administration Services provides ongoing management of the organization, including strategic planning, partnership networking, budgeting, finance management, general governance and staffing resources. 2025 was a busy year for Administration Services as GSCA worked to finalize a new strategic plan, aligned funding for and commenced renovation of GSCA's Administration Centre, relocated staff to a temporary office while continuing to provide our full suite of services, and launched new budgeting structures to improve sustainability, transparency and accountability.

Administration Services consists of the following:

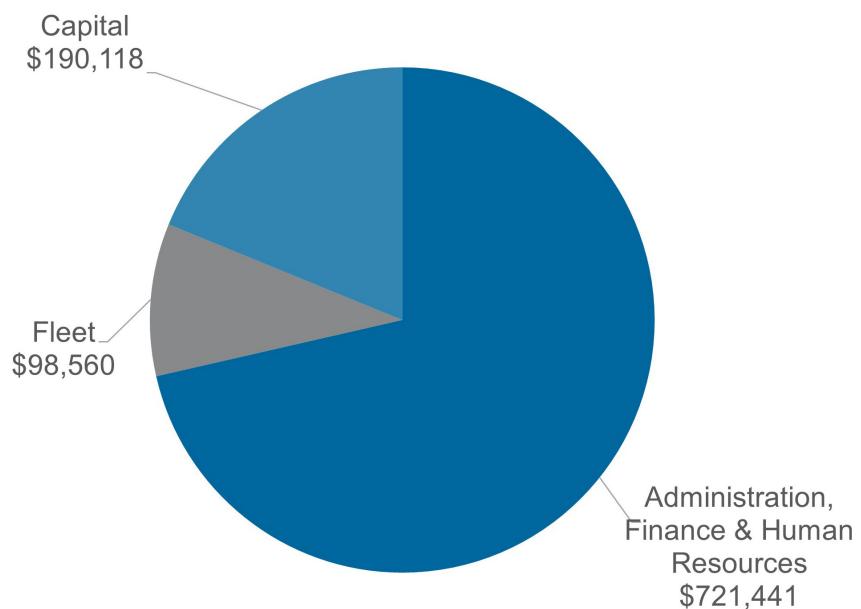
Administration, Finance & Human Resources

The 2026 budget for Administration, Finance and Human Resources sees a small overall decrease, primarily associated with a reduction in insurance costs and reduced overall spending on contracts and services. A decrease in services and sales within the department is offset by an increase in levy contribution.

Fleet & Equipment Management

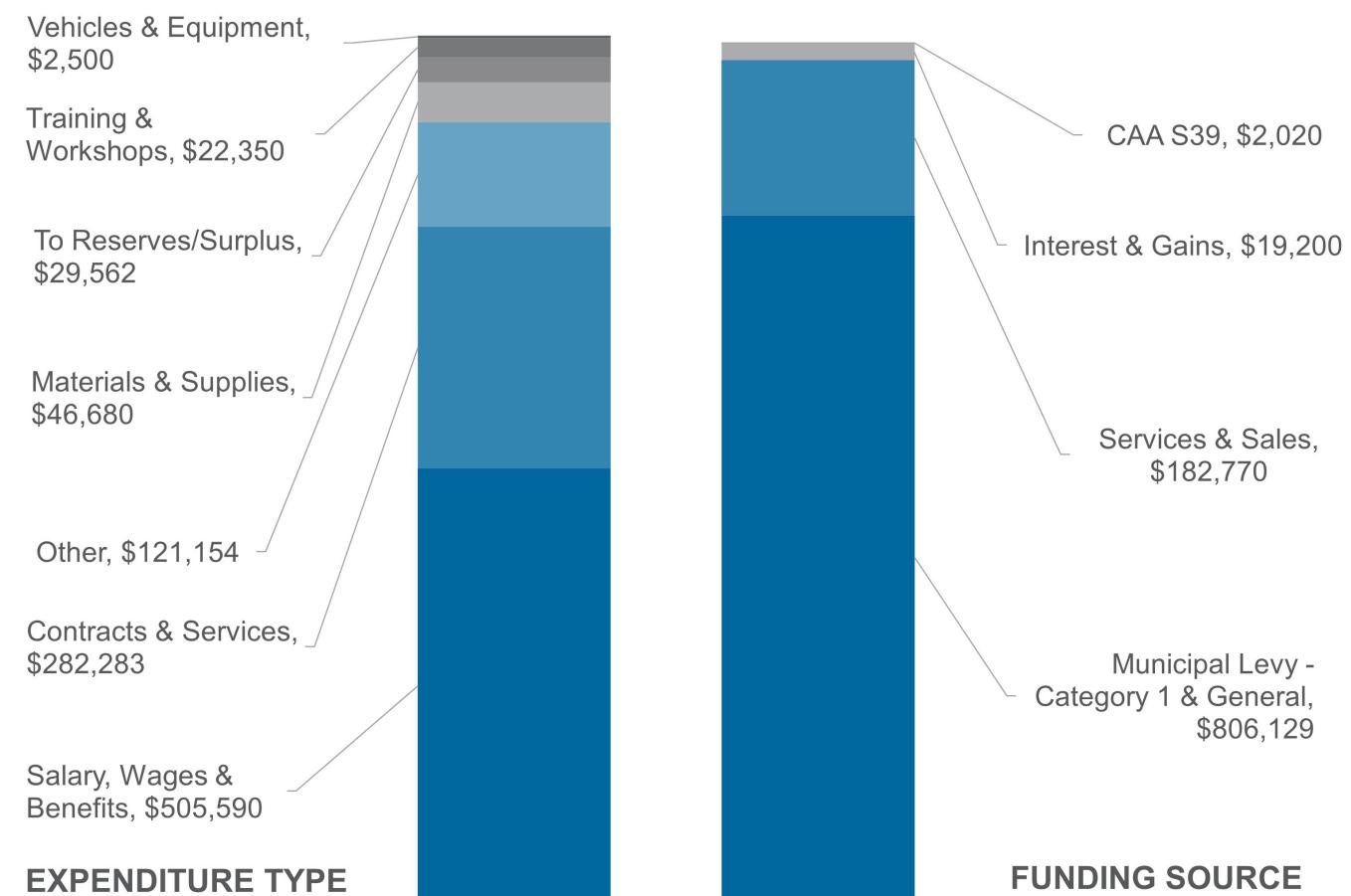
Revenue within the fleet and equipment budget is funded by chargebacks for mileage within each of the other budget departments. Revenues are proposed to be slightly lower in 2026. This reduced revenue shows as a slightly lower contribution to the fleet reserve.

ADMINISTRATION SERVICES



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$1,010,119*



* \$190,118 is related to Administration Centre debt repayment.



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, governance and partnership building.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Finalized and launched GSCA's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan, including a new Vision and Mission.
- Moved to a three (3) year budget document to provide a more open and transparent budgeting process.
- Completed 10-year Asset Management Plan.
- Revamped and modernized GSCA's Personnel Policy as part of move towards achieving organizational excellence.
- Undertook a major renovation of GSCA's Administrative Centre, including moving the Team to a temporary office location.
- Made internal changes to improve frontline customer service.





2026 FOCUS

- Establish a publicly accessible system to monitor and report on the progress of projects outlined in GSCA's 2025–2035 Strategic Plan.
- Finalize the construction phase of GSCA's Administration Centre renovation.
- Continue to enhance GSCA customer service standards.
- Work with the Province and our municipal partners on possible transition to a new conservation authorities' structure.

INTERESTING FACTS

- The total 2026 levy-based operating cost for all GSCA's programs equals approximately \$24.53 per resident per year or \$0.47 per week.
- This is an increase of \$0.92 per resident per year, or about \$0.02 per resident per week over 2025.



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.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Maintained our fleet and equipment in line with our Asset Management Plan to ensure efficiency, cost effectiveness, and continuity of service.

2026 FOCUS

- Maintain a proactive approach to preventative maintenance, repairs, licensing, and insurance updates.
- Continue assessing fleet needs to align with evolving operational demands.
- Explore grant opportunities to introduce innovative green vehicles and equipment, supporting GSCA's sustainability goals.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA owns and manages a fleet of 11 vehicles and oversees nearly \$70,000 in equipment equipment, ranging from utility trailers to field tools.
- The Operations Department ensures all vehicles and equipment are safe, reliable, and ready for deployment.
- GSCA's fleet supports everything from property maintenance and water monitoring to community outreach and environmental planning.

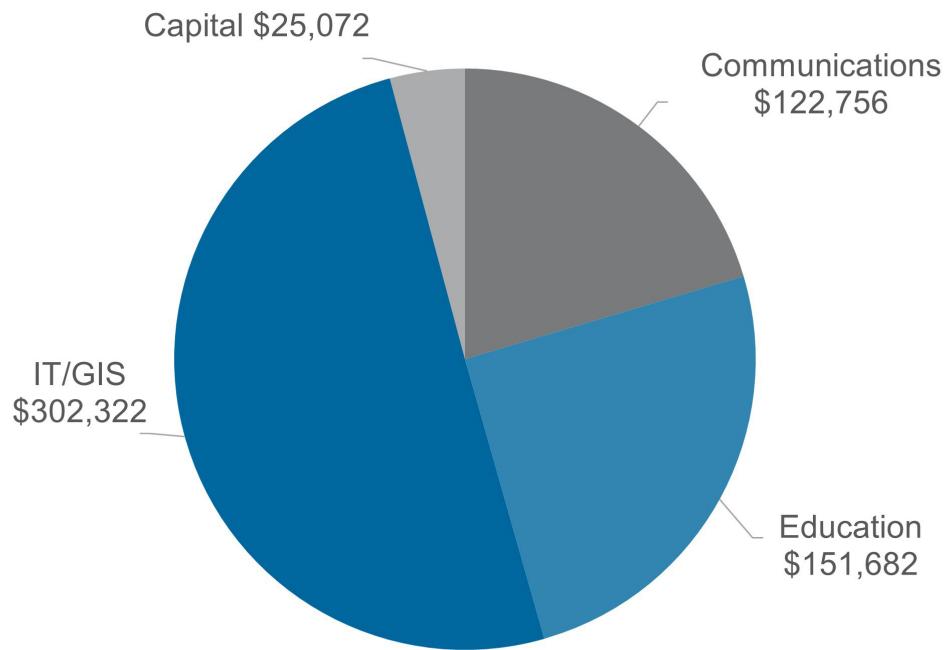


INFORMATION SERVICES

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: Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Information Technology, Communications, and Environmental Education.

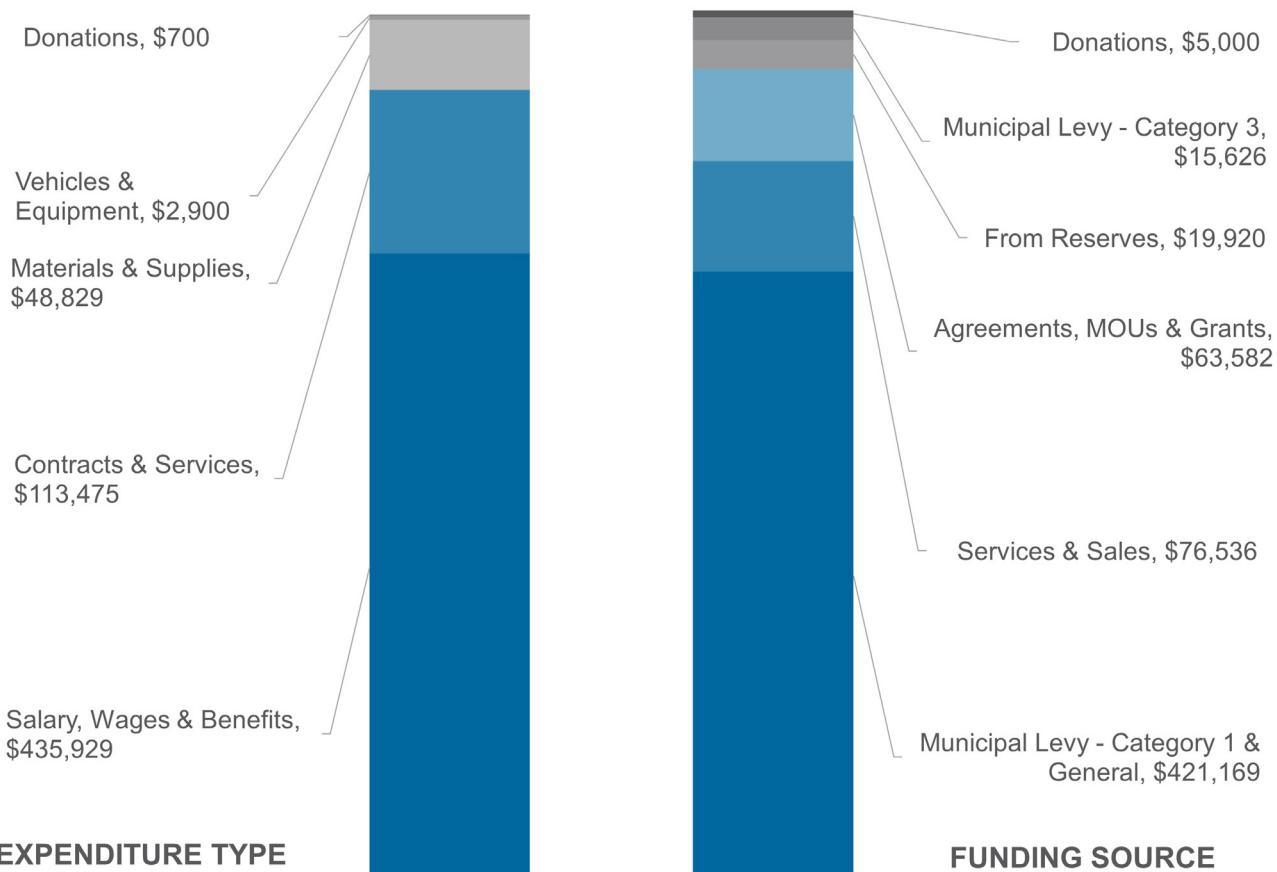


INFORMATION SERVICES



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$601,833





GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology supports all departments and other associated individuals or groups that use GSCA's computer technology resources and assets. A combination of staff, hardware, software and data all serve to ensure a fully integrated, secure network and the provision of required applications to meet the technological needs of all staff and users in the organization. This team also supports streamlining work and application procedures and data flow across departments for maximum efficiency within the organization.

The GIS team undertakes the deployment, management and administration of spatial data and other associated information. This program is responsible for the creation, acquisition, storage, analysis and display of spatial information. In addition, the GIS program provides support to partnering municipalities and the public, particularly with respect to regulatory and natural hazard mapping.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Managed the full relocation of IT infrastructure, overseeing the physical and digital move from the Administration Centre to the temporary downtown office.
- Developed and issued an RFP for a third-party managed service provider and successfully selected and onboarded MSP Corp as GSCA's new IT vendor.
- Updated and enhanced maps for the Explore Guide, ensuring accurate and user-friendly content.
- Enhanced field mapping workflows to improve efficiency and data accuracy.
- Streamlined payment systems, implementing continuous improvements that simplified workflows, expanded payment options, and increased accessibility.
- Updated and improved Grey County's online Application to Harvest, Destroy, or Injure Trees permitting system.



- Supported online tree sales by refining the online system and integrating it more effectively with internal databases.
- Maintained and renewed IT assets, ensuring systems remained reliable, secure, and up to date.

2026 FOCUS

- Lead the setup and implementation of new IT infrastructure at the renovated Administration Centre to support a smooth return to the building.
- Oversee the transition from wireless internet to a fibre service provider to improve network reliability and performance.
- Support the transition of flood forecasting and warning programming while strengthening the business processes that guide this work.
- Process, manage and disseminate 2025 air photo products.
- Carry out business process analysis to identify improvements and enhance digital workflows across the organization.
- Work with the managed service provider to advance business continuity planning and IT security procedures.
- Continue providing organization-wide support for data and mapping needs.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA uses low-cost and open-source GIS applications to minimize costs associated with departmental mapping and spatial information.
- The term Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was first coined by a Canadian named Roger Tomlinson in 1960!
- Through collaboration with the Provincial Government, GSCA acquires new air photos every 5 years and now has Light Detection and Ranging Data (LiDAR) for the entire watershed.



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.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Provided ongoing support of departmental, GSCA Foundation, and partner group communications needs and content creation.
- Supported the finalization of GSCA's new Strategic Plan and promotional materials.
- Facilitated the parking pass loan program, making GSCA Membership Parking Passes available at libraries throughout Grey and Bruce Counties.
- Kept our communities informed and engaged by producing GSCA's seasonal newsletter.
- Implemented strategic advertising and social media campaigns to enhance GSCA's outreach.
- Revamped the Explore Guide to help visitors discover 23 of GSCA's most popular properties, providing clear trail maps and amenity information to enhance the visitor experience.
- Promoted GSCA and the new Strategic Plan at community events.
- Completed website updates and launched new webpages to improve user experience and the availability of information.
- Designed interpretive signs that highlight the unique natural, cultural, and historical features of GSCA properties.
- Updated GSCA's Public Communications Policy to ensure consistent and effective external communications.



2026 FOCUS

- Begin implementing the updated Public Communications Policy to ensure clear, consistent, and transparent communications.
- Support annual reporting on GSCA's Strategic Plan progress.
- Design new wayfinding, trailhead, and interpretive signage at several GSCA properties.
- Develop engaging display materials to highlight GSCA programs and services.
- Continue the renewal of the GSCA website to improve accessibility and user experience.
- Provide ongoing communications support for GSCA departments and partner organizations.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA utilizes Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (X) to share information with residents across the watershed and beyond.
- Staff attended the Rural Communications Summit hosted by Grey County.
- The GSCA newsletter was delivered to over 1,300 people in 2025.





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.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Launched a community-driven Turtle Stewardship Program, with volunteers monitoring nesting turtles, installing nest protectors, tracking hatchlings, and contributing data through iNaturalist. Grant funding also supported new wetland education programs for youth across the region.
- Developed natural hazard education programming with support from a Hydro One grant, to be delivered in 2026.
- Expanded the World of Trees event by welcoming new school groups, ensuring diverse youth participation, and partnering with the St. Mary's High School Eco Team and Inglis Falls Arboretum Alliance volunteers to lead educational stations.
- Partnered with the City of Owen Sound to host a successful, family-friendly Salmon Discovery Day event, funded by Community Foundation Grey Bruce.
- Delivered three weeks of summer day camp at Hibou Conservation Area during the Administration Centre renovations.
- Offered a Winter Guided Hike Series supported by Community Foundation Grey Bruce, and a summer hike at The Glen in partnership with the Métis Nation of Ontario.
- Hosted a March Break Day Camp, providing two complimentary spots for children from underserved families.
- Delivered invasive species programming in partnership with the Inglis Falls Arboretum Alliance and the Invasive Species Action Fund, including invasive plant removal and native species planting.
- Provided guest environmental programming at regional day camps, including Saugeen Ojibway Nation STEM Camp, YMCA, Grey Roots, and At Last Forest School.
- Supported the Rekindle Conservation Authority Educators' Conference at the Outdoor Education Centre in Wiarton.



- Delivered curriculum-linked education programs with schools and organizations across the watershed, including Kikendaasogamig, Bruce's Caves, Timothy Christian School, Queen of Hearts, Sullivan, Bruce Museum, and Bruce Peninsula District School.

2026 FOCUS

- Complete the Echoes of the Marsh Greenbelt project, which includes: expanding the Turtle Stewardship Program, delivering curriculum-linked wetland education, developing multi-lingual signage at Bognor Marsh, strengthening partnerships with Indigenous and Métis communities, and hosting a public signage unveiling event.
- Deliver the Wetland Education for a Resilient Future: Natural Hazards Program at Clendenan, Isaac Lake, and the Outdoor Education Centre, featuring new interpretive signage and curriculum-linked learning funded by Hydro One.
- Return summer day camps to the Administration Centre and offer seven weeks of engaging camp programming.
- Continue evaluating and refining education programs to align with GSCA expertise, available funding, and property use—focusing on the most engaging and impactful experiences for schools.
- Host an Earth Day Film Festival, showcasing eco-themed short films created by local students in collaboration with high school art and science classes, supported by grant funding.
- Partner with Intersections Wood Collaborative and CMHA to deliver woodworking workshops where participants build turtle nest protectors, learn about wetland conservation, and contribute to stewardship efforts, supported by a Community Foundation Grey Bruce grant.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Staff Secured over \$75,000 in grant funding to support environmental education across the watershed. With more than 92% of the Environmental Education budget self-generated, these funds are crucial for sustaining and expanding impactful programs.
- GSCA Partnered with Watersheds Canada to create 16 themed Nature Discovery Backpacks that are available for loan through libraries and community hubs, supporting both community use and GSCA education programs.

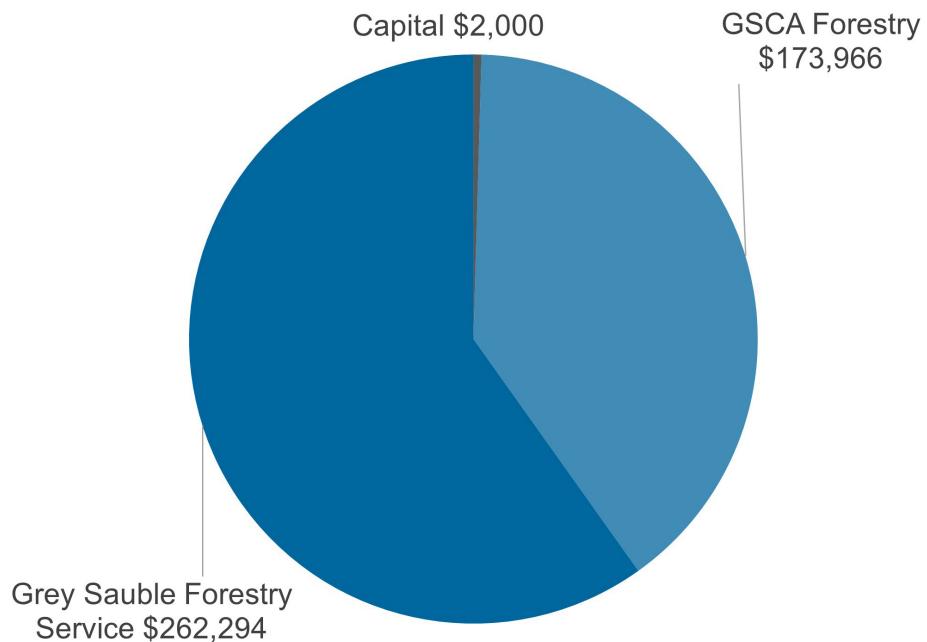


FORESTRY

GSCA's Forestry Department sustainably manages the forests on all GSCA lands 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 and improving wildlife habitat, reducing the impacts of severe weather events, improving water quality, and increasing soil retention.

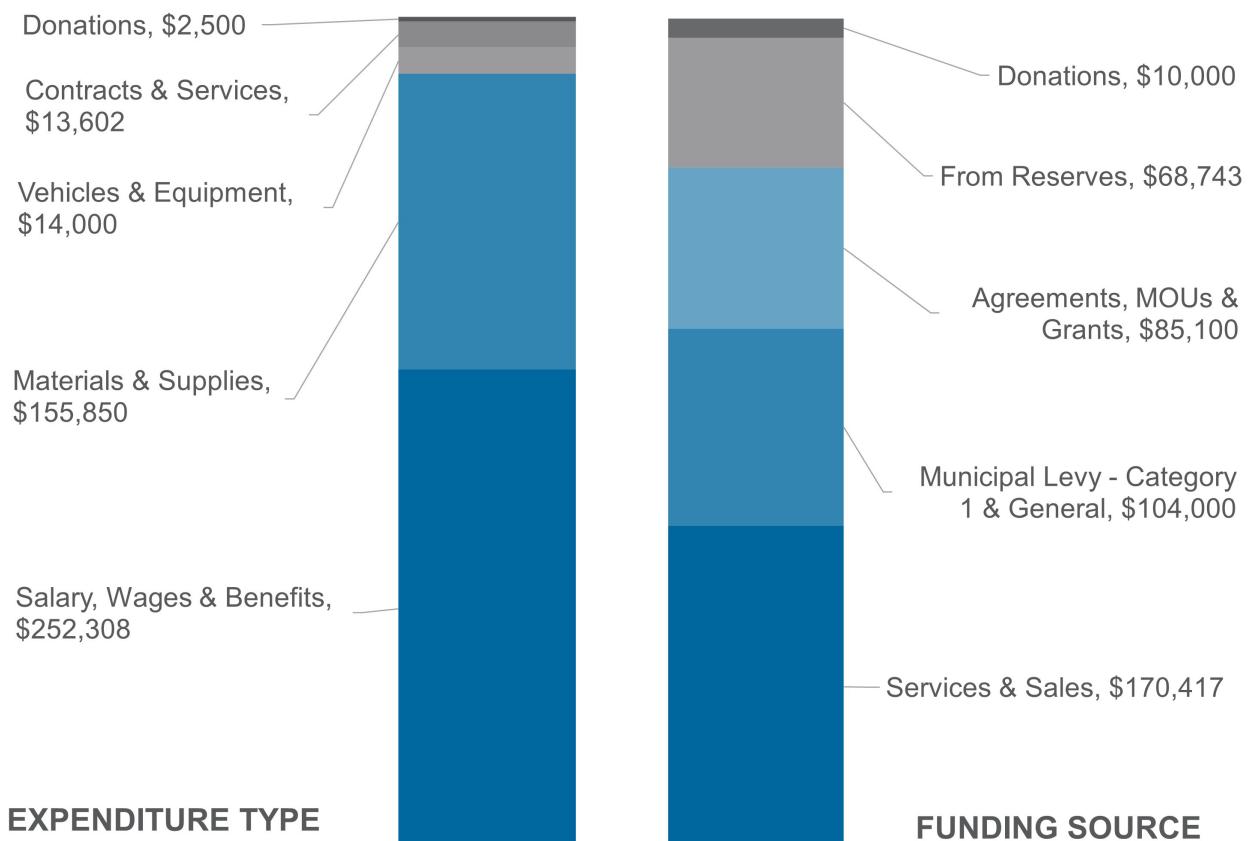


FORESTRY



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$438,260





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 the forests.

Forest management activities include the sustainable harvesting of trees. Forest management activities aim to mimic the natural disturbances that affect the forests of GSCA's watersheds. By mimicking these natural disturbances, GSCA can sustainably harvest its forested lands while still providing numerous benefits such as wildlife habitats, carbon absorption and sequestration, and the production of forest products such as firewood and lumber.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed two sustainable harvest operations on GSCA properties, providing renewable wood products that support the local economy and improving overall forest health.
- Supported the development of Hardwood Forest Management webpages that provide information on forest management practices on GSCA lands.
- Issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an analysis of growth and yield data for GSCA forests and awarded the contract to the successful proponent.
- Helped organize and run the Bruce Grey Forest Festival, an outdoor educational event that attracted over 1,000 grade 7 students. More than 150 high school students participated by running stations and teaching the younger attendees.



2026 FOCUS

- Engage a consultant to analyze growth and yield data.
- Support and expand the Bruce Grey Forest Festival.
- Expand invasive species control on GSCA lands.

INTERESTING FACTS

- Harvesting operations in GSCA's forests are sustainably executed and meet and/or exceed all local and provincial legislation.
- The goal of GSCA's Forest Management Program is to balance the environmental, social, cultural, and economic values of the forest.
- At least 50% of an 80-year-old tree is composed of carbon.



GREY SAUBLE FORESTRY SERVICE

The Grey Sauble Forestry Service (GSFS) 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 planting trees; Forest Management Plans; and the sale of affordable native trees and seedlings.

Trees provide numerous benefits to landowners and the entire community, such as improved air and water quality; increased resilience to the impacts of flooding; and reduced household energy bills. The GSFS offers reduced pricing of trees to landowners through bulk purchasing. The GSFS is also able to offer tree planting grants to landowners to help offset some of the cost of these projects. 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.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Planted 25,380 trees for 11 landowners, creating approximately 17 hectares (40 acres) of future forests throughout the watershed. Planting trees benefits landowners, the environment, and communities by improving air quality, soil retention, water quality, recreation spaces, and wildlife habitats.
- Completed 21 Forest Management Plans for private landowners across the GSCA watershed, providing valuable insights into the health and management of their forested lands. These plans not only enhance the landowners' understanding but also play a critical role in safeguarding wildlife habitats, promoting biodiversity, and protecting valuable forest resources for future generations.
- Hosted the annual tree sale and sold out of most seedlings and landscape trees.
- Sold over 17,000 seedlings and 2,300 landscape trees through pre-orders, contributing to more trees being planted across the watershed.



2026 FOCUS

- Plant 50,000 trees throughout the GSCA watershed.
- Expand the tree sale program to engage a larger audience and increase the planting of native species in the GSCA watershed.

INTERESTING FACTS

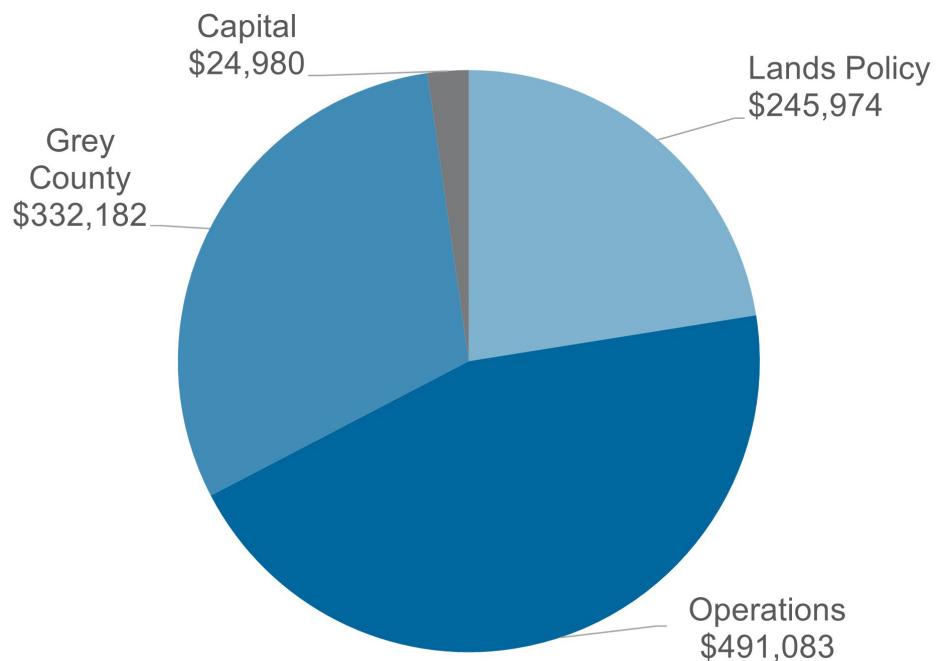
- Planting trees can help reduce heating and cooling costs at home.
- Trees are a great way to make use of marginal or less productive acreage.
- Implementing a Forest Management Plan through the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program can reduce your property taxes.
- Trees planted along watercourses (riparian 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

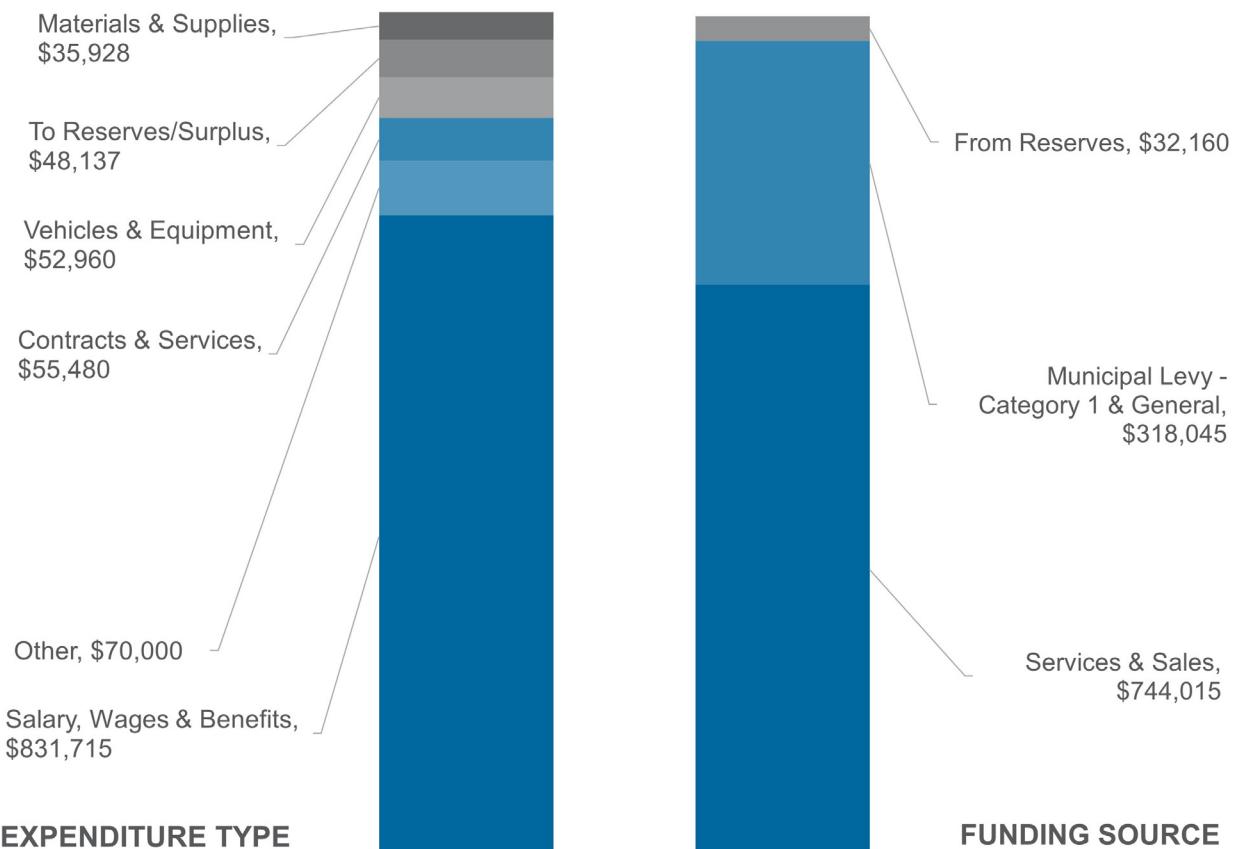
GSCA has been actively protecting the natural landscape of Grey and Bruce Counties for over 60 years through property acquisition and sustainable land management efforts. GSCA lands have been divided into three classifications based on the reason for acquisition, conditions on title, or management objectives, which include conservation areas, management areas, and nature preserves. A preliminary evaluation of GSCA's landholdings determined that 86-million dollars of ecosystem service benefits are provided annually to residents and visitors by over 11,000 hectares of land and 150 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!

CONSERVATION LANDS



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$1,094,220





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.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completed Phase 2 of the Spirit Rock Management Plan.
- Completed an Ash Management Strategy for GSCA lands.
- Continued to work on Phragmites removal projects on GSCA lands.
- Progressed on one land acquisition and one land disposition project.
- Supported several signage projects to enhance GSCA lands.
- Managed GSCA property leases, agreements and easements.
- Supported the NEPOSS Council through regular committee meetings.
- Carried out the Grey County Contract for Forest Management, Bylaw and Trails.



2026 FOCUS

- Commence ash management deliverables as set out in the 2025 strategy.
- Update interpretive signage at various GSCA properties.
- Continue to implement project deliverables from approved management plans, including: a viewing platform and updated boardwalks at Inglis Falls and a new trail constructed at Eugenia Falls along with wayfinding and trailhead signage.
- Complete the approval process for the Spirit Rock Management Plan, setting the framework for ongoing management and conservation initiatives.
- Complete phase 1 of the Hibou Conservation Area Management Plan.
- Begin the development of a climbing plan for West Rocks Management Area.
- Acquire the Sutherland Quarry and celebrate this acquisition with a community ribbon cutting event.
- Carry out the Grey County Forest Management, Bylaw and Trails contract.

INTERESTING FACTS

- GSCA's properties host over 300,000 visitors annually.
- By investing in a GSCA Membership Parking Pass, you are investing in the future of GSCA properties while also being able to enjoy these properties all year long.



CONSERVATION LANDS OPERATIONS

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

Operations staff are responsible for a broad range of tasks, including removing hazards, implementation of Capital Projects, building and repairing infrastructure, landscaping, snow removal, snow surveys, addressing compliance issues, overseeing the Grey County CP Rail contract, installation, removal and maintenance of dams, working closely with partners to enhance properties, and managing the Ambassador Parking Program.



2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Exceeded net parking revenue budget target, supporting ongoing site maintenance.
- Upgraded the Inglis Falls washroom to improve accessibility and inclusivity.
- Installed an accessible trail to the Inglis Falls lookout.
- Removed old stoplogs and installed newly built replacements in two bays at Clendenan Dam Conservation Area.
- Responded promptly to public complaints and inquiries, maintaining strong community engagement.
- Partnered with Friends of Hibou to repair boardwalks.
- Decommissioned outdated vaulted washrooms at Bruce's Caves, Colopy's Lookout, and Eugenia Falls.
- Re-pointed the historic stone arches at Eugenia Falls to preserve architectural integrity.
- Built and installed new entrance signage across GSCA properties.
- Decommissioned the pavilion at Eugenia Falls.
- Removed hazardous trees, including ash trees affected by Emerald Ash Borer, across multiple properties.
- Constructed and installed new stoplogs at Rankin Dam.
- Installed updated paid parking signage at all applicable properties.
- Worked with IFAA to complete Norway Maple removal from the Arboretum.
- Enhanced lookouts at Inglis and Eugenia Falls.
- Created new picnic areas at Eugenia Falls to improve visitor amenities.



2026 FOCUS

- Install wayfinding and trailhead signage at Eugenia Falls.
- Update boardwalks along the Filtration Plant trail.
- Remove the pavilion at Arran Lake.
- Develop a new side trail at Eugenia Falls.
- Continue support for the Administrative Centre renovation project.
- Build and install new stoplogs at Rankin Dam.
- Build and install new safety railing at the Inglis Falls lookout.

INTERESTING FACTS

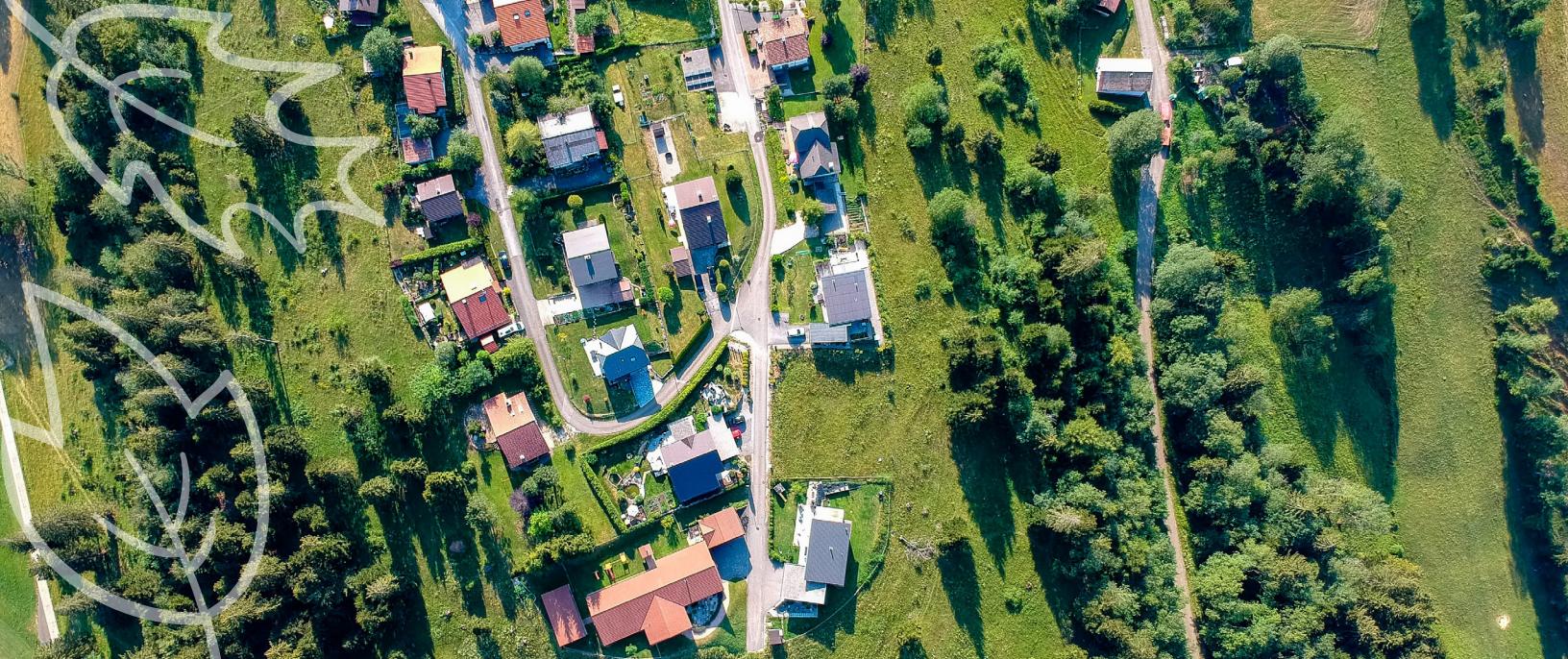
- Operations staff maintain approximately 150 km of trails across GSCA properties, a distance equivalent to walking from Owen Sound to Brampton.
- Parking fees generated through the parking program helping offset the costs of maintaining popular conservation areas that attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to Grey and Bruce Counties each year.
- GSCA manages almost 29,000 acres, offering unique natural features, from waterfalls and wetlands to forests and geological formations.
- Inglis Falls alone sees over 100,000 visitors annually, making it one of the most visited natural attractions in the region.
- The Clendenan Dam stoplogs are custom built by GSCA staff, a rare skillset that supports local water management and flood control.
- GSCA's conservation lands provide habitat for dozens of species at risk, including birds, amphibians, and native plants.



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 41/24 - Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits. These services guide development in a responsible manner away from natural hazards for the protection of people and property.

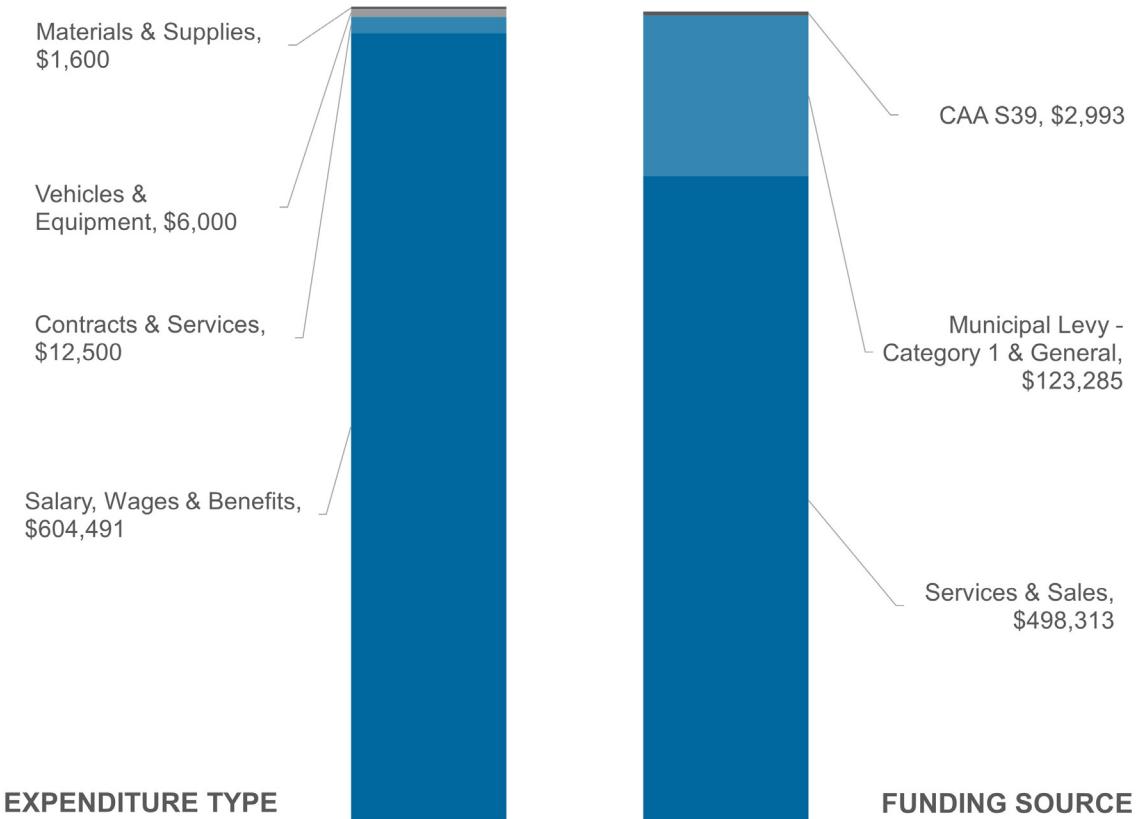




ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & REGULATIONS

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$624,591





2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Onboarded a new departmental Administrative Assistant to strengthen front-line service.
- Implemented a new Permitting Hearing Procedures document.
- Provided ongoing guidance to support municipal planning decisions related to natural hazards.
- Collaborated with other conservation authorities through the Conservation Authorities Coastal Network, contributing expertise and advancing shared priorities related to coastal management and resilience.

2026 FOCUS

- Prepare for potential changes arising from the Province's recent announcement regarding Conservation Authorities.
- Continue to provide input and mapping for municipal planning documents and planning applications.
- Strive for service excellence in delivering planning and permit functions.
- Review regulation policies to support Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Permits, and Exemptions.
- Pursue grants to update floodplain mapping in flood-prone areas and flood damage centers.

INTERESTING FACTS

From January 1, 2025 to November, 2025 staff:

- Received 145 submissions through the online planning and permit inquiry form.
- Processed 291 permits under Ontario Regulation 41/24.
- Reviewed 185 Planning Act applications and 24 NEC applications.
- Completed 138 pre-consultations, regulation inquiries, and site review letters.

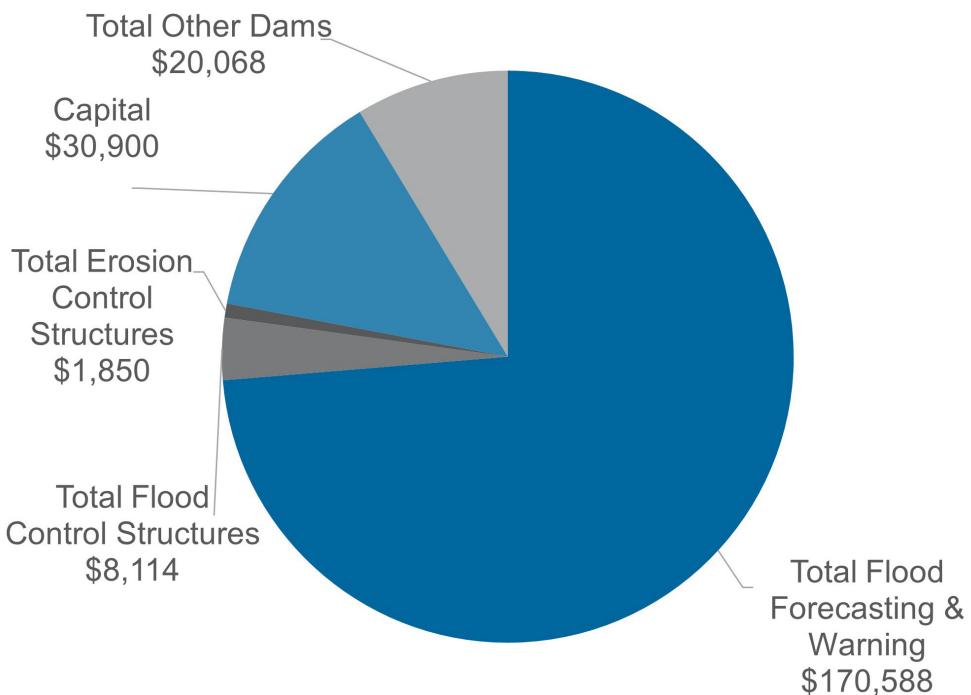


WATER & ENGINEERING SERVICES

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.

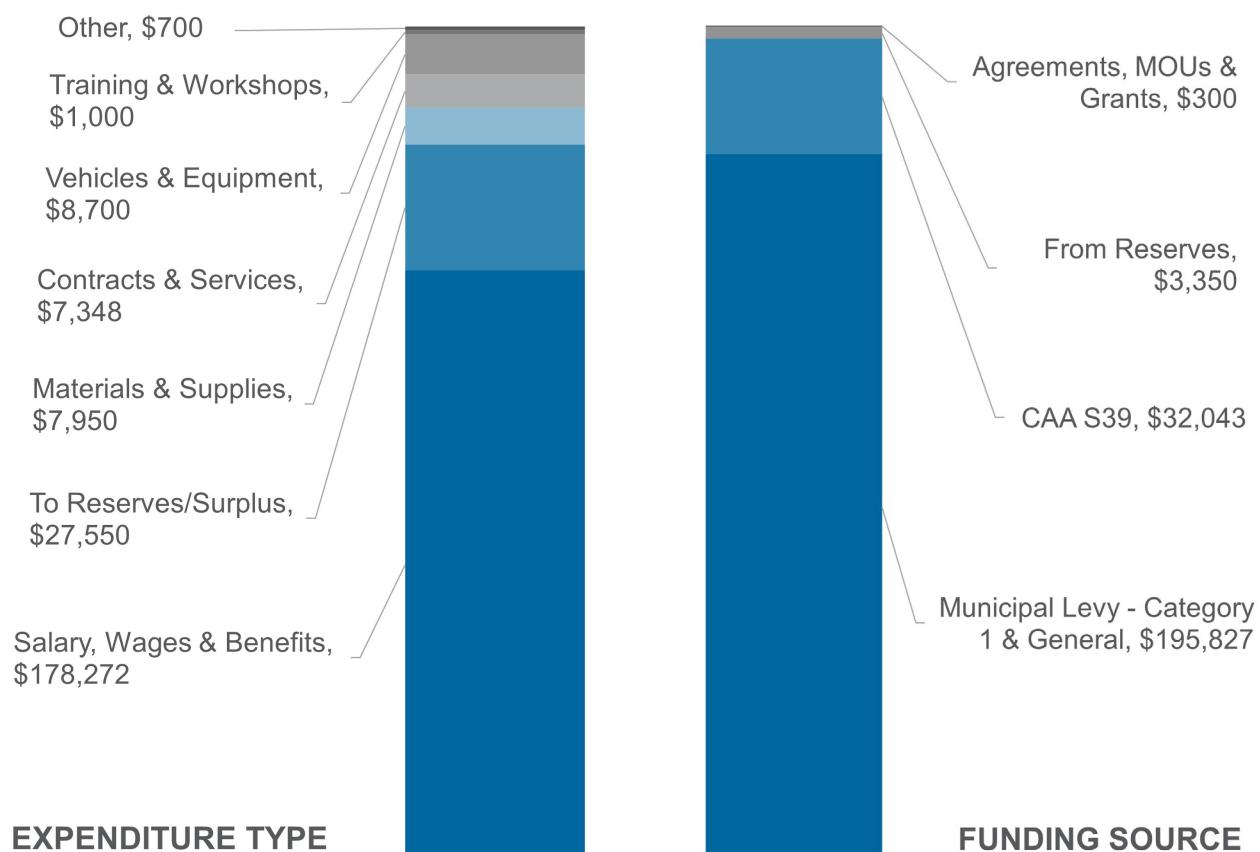


WATER & ENGINEERING SERVICES



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$231,520





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.

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.
- Measured and modeled snow cover data is available on GSCA's website.
- GSCA provides free CoCoRaHS rain gauges to anyone who signs up to participate within the watershed.





2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Partnered with Water Survey of Canada and the Ministry of Natural Resources to maintain 8 flow/water level gauges. Six of these sites have precipitation gauges.
- Maintained and monitored 7 snow survey sites throughout our watersheds.
- Maintained 18 water level gauges at key locations throughout our watersheds.
- Worked continuously to inform municipal partners and community members of extreme rainfall events and high flow conditions.
- Continued to partner with volunteers to maintain a network of 18 online weather stations (Wunderground Network).
- Recruited 2 new CoCoRaHS rain gauge volunteers, totaling 27 active participants.
- Continued to fine-tune flow and snow melt forecast models to better predict spring runoff conditions.
- Due to retirement of 3G cellular networks, all GSCA water level monitoring equipment was changed to 4G cellular (17 in total).
- Volunteers continue to contribute to online real-time weather stations networks. More than 20 new stations were added in 2025 to bring the total network that GSCA accesses to 145.

2026 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.
- Maintain existing network of water level gauges in flood prone areas.
- Continue to work with rain gauge volunteers to fill data holes within the GSCA watershed.
- Train support staff to help maintain the flood monitoring network and enhance long-term monitoring reliability.



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 MNR.

2025 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.
- Completed regular dam adjustments, including log installs, log removals, plugs, and beaver debris elimination.

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 three dams, including Rankin Dam, Skinner's Marsh Dam, and the Owen Sound Mill Dam.

2026 FOCUS

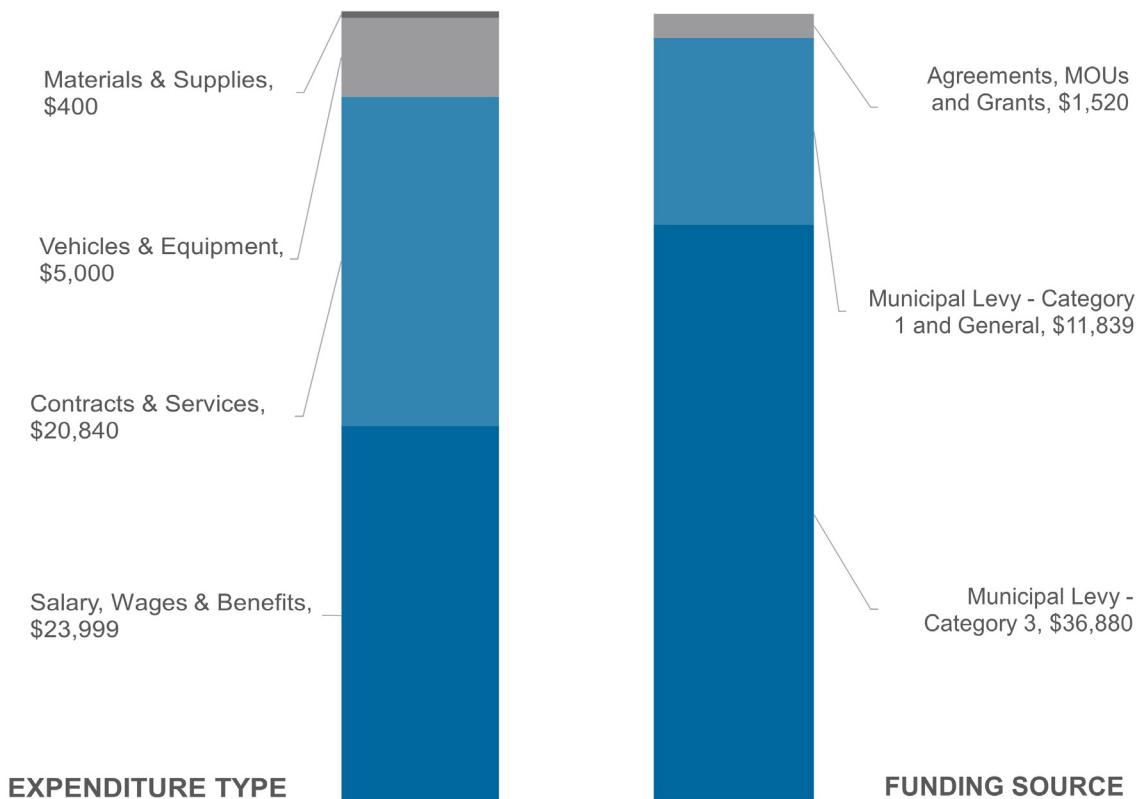
- Continue to maintain dam structures and manage water levels for both recreation, wildlife and flood control.
- Ensure erosion control structures continue to function as designed.
- Continue repairs to the gabion baskets at Indian Falls Conservation Area.

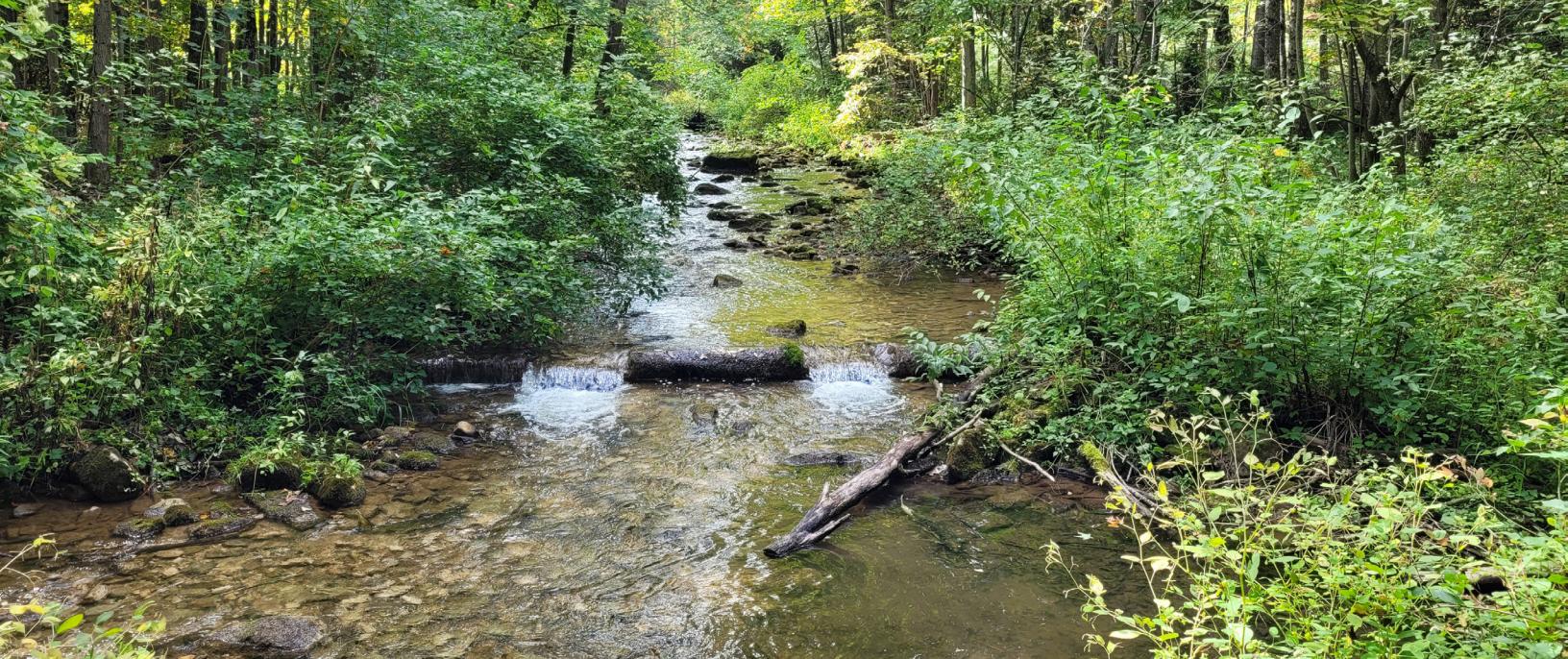


WATER QUALITY MONITORING & WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$50,239





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.





2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Sampled 35 water sites 8 times and sampled 15 benthic sites to support GSCA's Watershed Report Card evaluations.
- Expanded our online benthic identification training to include staff from all of the Conservation Authorities.

2026 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.

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!
- GSCA's website provides monthly precipitation and Crop Heat Unit maps (CHU).



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 works to secure 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 producers and landowners, organizations including but not limited to: Stewardship Grey Bruce, Freshwater Conservation Canada, Metis Canada, Healthy Lake Huron, Lake Huron Forever, and Bruce Power.

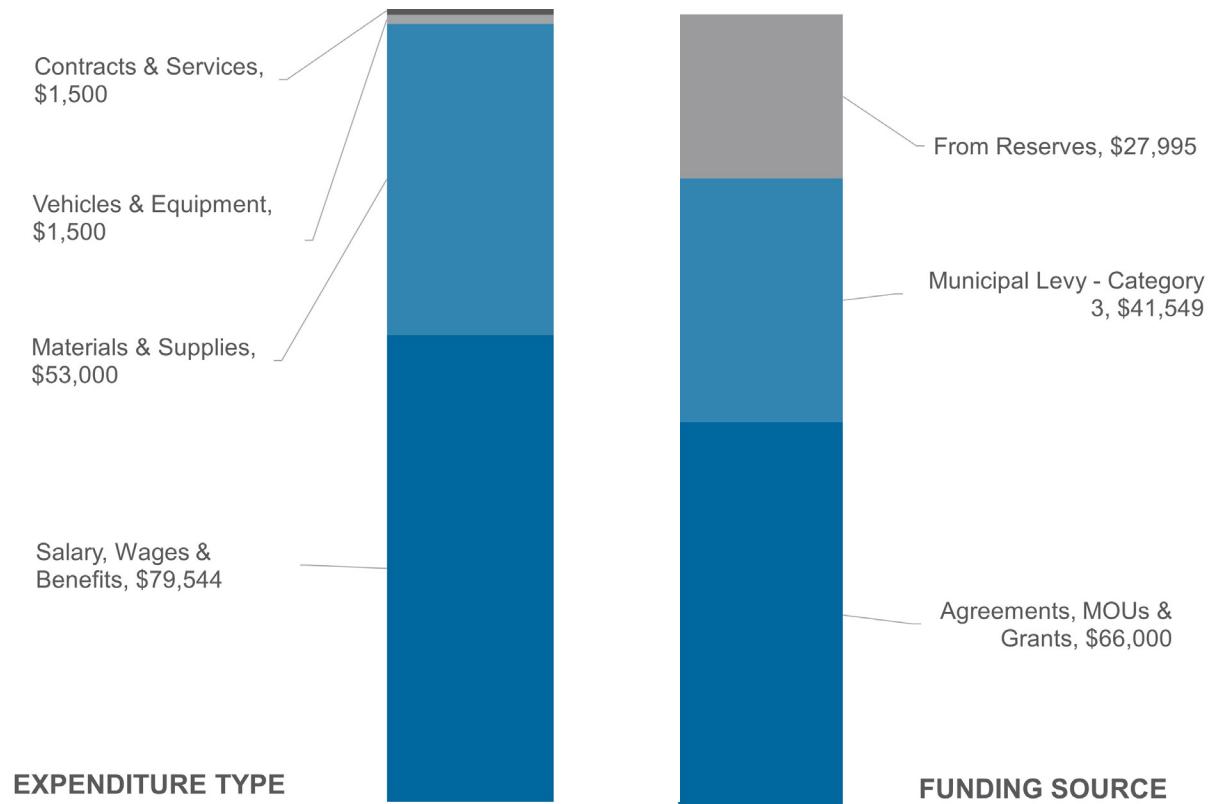
Invasive species monitoring and management is an additional branch of the Stewardship Program. The main focuses of invasive species in the GSCA watershed are Phragmites and Wild Chervil. The Stewardship program has been instrumental in identifying and assisting with management activities on several of the GSCA shoreline and non-shoreline properties.





STEWARSHIP

FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES TOTAL \$135,544





2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Led a learning engagement and tree planting day with students from Bluewater Districts Agricultural Specialists High Skills Major Class.
- Continued Collaboration efforts with Metis Nation of Ontario, Trout Canada, Freshwater, and Bruce Power working to support improvements in Bothwell Creek.
- Promoted healthier shoreline and wetland environments by supporting invasive species removal initiatives at both Hibou and Bognor Marsh sites.
- Offered resources, education, and encouraged landowners to use agriculture stewardship Best Management Practices (BMPs) and available grant opportunities to improve their landscape.
- Actively attended community, agriculture, municipal and stewardship related events to promote stewardship on agriculture landscapes and showcase the social/ecosystem benefits of conservation on marginal agriculture landscapes.
- Continued promoting the Watershed Report Card to landowners to help identify areas for improvement.
- Furthered collaboration with Healthy Lake Huron group to promote and seek further funding support for the impacts of erodible landscape to both soil health and Lake Huron's water quality.



2026 FOCUS

- Expand existing agricultural stewardship projects and encourage more landowners to adopt agricultural BMPs throughout the Grey Sauble watershed.
- Foster ongoing conversations and collaborations around drainage of agricultural lands, showing how BMPs can enhance farm operations while addressing environmental concerns.
- Coordinate knowledge-sharing opportunities for landowners, industry experts, and municipal representatives to better understand the importance and methods of agricultural drainage.
- Actively collaborate with other departments to strengthen conservation efforts across the watershed.

INTERESTING FACTS

In 2025, staff:

- Successfully acquired cover crop funding that facilitated over 500 acres of soil coverage to maintain cover after the growing season.
- Supported planting over 5,000 trees to expand forest cover across watershed.
- Collaborated with agriculture class to plant 250 trees along Sydenham River tributary.
- Implemented over 2,000 metres of new watercourse exclusion fencing to promote water quality initiatives.
- Worked with producers to develop/implement BMPs projects and acquire offset funding to support BMPs infrastructure costs.



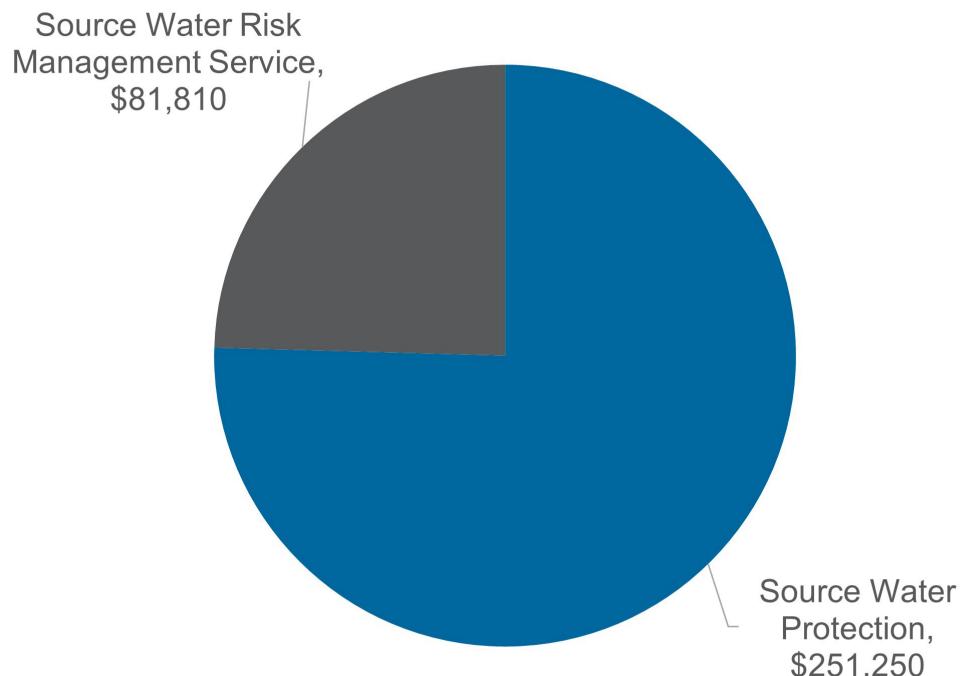
DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION

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. 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 either budget.

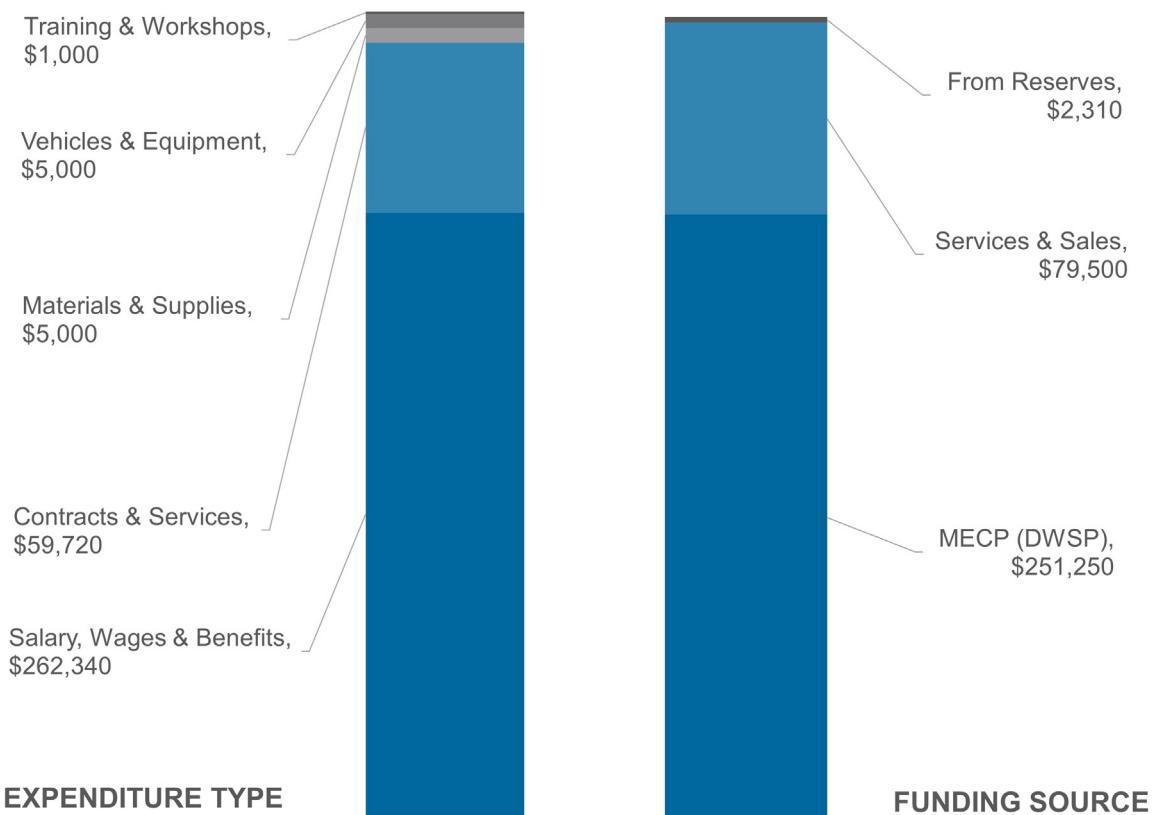
Funding was provided in the Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) 2024/2027 Grant Funding Agreement to conduct a technical study for the Kimberley/Talisman and Shallow Lake Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA). This review is necessary due to karst features in these areas including numerous sink holes and strong karst influence on water movement towards the groundwater springs connected to these drinking water systems. A consulting contract has been awarded for this project, whereby the final report will be used for updates to the protection areas, source protection plan and its policies.

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION



FUNDING SOURCES & EXPENSE TYPES

TOTAL \$333,060





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.

2025 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.
- Renewed one Source Protection Committee Member (out of a 12-person Committee).
- Currently working with affected landowners and municipalities on implementing Source Protection Plan amendments.
- Planning to submit to the Minister of the Environment for approval, Section 34 Source Protection Plan amendments related to: two to three new municipal wells; updated mapping; possible policy changes related to vulnerable karst areas.





2026 FOCUS

- Implement the proposed amendments to the Source Protection Plan, with affected landowners.
- Complete amendments to the source protection plan to include new/updated drinking water systems, as required by Regulation 205 of the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- Work with municipalities on implementing Ministry best practices for source water protection in areas not covered by current source protection plan.
- Work with the Municipality of Grey Highlands, Township of Georgian Bluffs, and local landowners on karst landform related research study, which may result in changes to existing Wellhead Protection Area delineations in these areas.
- Increased interaction with agricultural communities via local Federations of Agriculture in Grey and Bruce Counties.

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.
- The Source Protection Committee feels that the great progress to date on source protection plan implementation was made possible with the strong support and direct involvement of municipalities, agricultural and industry sectors, as well as other environmental and health related stakeholder groups.
- In 2025 (25th Anniversary of Walkerton Crisis), the Committee took time to reflect and acknowledge success of protecting municipal drinking water activities and look forward to continued progress and enhancements to the protection of our water sources.

* The Source Water Protection budget and achievements apply to the fiscal year (April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026).



DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION RISK MANAGEMENT

Grey Sauble Conservation staff have the designated responsibility for the delivery of Risk Management services on behalf of 15 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.

2025 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Since the Source Protection Plan policies came into effect (July 2016), 215 Risk Management Plans have been negotiated, 400 inspections completed, and 613 Land Use Screening Notices issued.
- Over 20 Inspections carried out by a Grey Sauble Risk Management Official/Inspector for prohibited or regulated activities.
- There is a 100% compliance rate with the Risk Management Plans established in our source protection region.



2026 FOCUS

- Renew approximately 6 Risk Management Plans (5-year renewal cycle).
- Conduct ongoing restricted land use planning screenings as required and support communication efforts with municipalities on planning related issues.
- Promote Best Management Practices across Source Protection Region watersheds for all water users.

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, Northern Bruce Peninsula, and Southgate. Grey Sauble Conservation staff have the designated responsibility for the delivery of Risk Management services on behalf of 15 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.



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