Conservation Authority Consolidation Information
Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority

October 23, 2026

Watershed Municipalities
Attention: Clerks and Chief Administrative Officers

Dear Watershed Municipality,

Re: Municipal Partnership, Governance and Transition Actions

On February 1, 2027, Ontario's 36 conservation authorities will be consolidated into nine regional conservation authorities, and your municipality is located within the regional jurisdiction of the future Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority (LHRCA).

This consolidation will bring together the experience, local knowledge and established partnerships of our founding conservation authorities, with a shared priority to support a well-coordinated transition and to build a regional conservation authority that serves local municipalities and communities effectively.

The following outlines the changes and actions needed to prepare for February 1, 2027.

Summary of Membership and Governance Changes
Historically, single, upper and lower-tier municipalities have been participating municipalities of a conservation authority, which meant that they:

- Appointed members to their conservation authority's Board of Directors;
- Received a draft of their conservation authority's budget for comment; and
- Were invoiced for their municipal apportionment.

Earlier this year, the *Conservation Authorities Act* was amended to recognize counties as upper-tier municipalities, and to make only single and upper-tier municipalities the participating municipalities of the new consolidated regional conservation authorities. This means that under the new regional structure the responsibilities outlined above will rest with single and upper-tier municipalities.

Appointment of Board Members
Following the upcoming municipal election, single and upper-tier municipalities will be responsible for appointing members to the Board of Directors to the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority (subject to final seat allocations by the province).

- These appointments must be made through a resolution of council, a copy of which should be forwarded to the LHRCA once passed. Contact information for resolution submission will be communicated to watershed municipalities in early January 2027.
- The LHRCA must receive council resolutions **no later than January 31, 2027,** as the new Board of Directors will meet in early February to operationalize the new regional authority.
- Normally, appointments are for the four-year term of council, but a municipality may appoint a member for a shorter term or replace them during the term.

- The province recently consulted on a draft proposal regarding how many seats single and upper-tier municipalities could receive on the new regional conservation authority Boards of Directors. Once the province finalizes a governance model, we will inform your municipality about:
  - How many seats each municipality will have on the new Board; and
  - Any eligibility criteria for who can be appointed (e.g. resident of a municipality in the conservation authority's jurisdiction, elected official).

Continuation of Current Board
As per section 14 (4.2) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, current members continue to serve on the conservation authority's Board of Directors until a municipality appoints or reappoints a member for **the new term, which will take effect as of February 1, 2027**.

To support continuity through the final months of the transition, where possible, we encourage single, upper and lower-tier municipalities, where possible, to retain their current conservation authority board representatives through January 31, 2027. Their experience will support the completion of remaining governance, budget and transition responsibilities.

Budget and Invoicing
Conservation authorities were directed by the province to complete their 2027 budget and ensure apportionment invoices are issued to single, upper and lower-tier municipalities for a final time, before January 31, 2027.

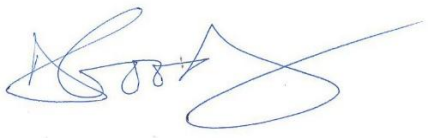
Starting with the 2028 budget, **only** single and upper-tier municipalities will receive draft conservation authority budgets for review and will be invoiced for their apportionment moving forward.

As Project Executive and CAO Designate for the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority, I look forward to working with our municipalities across the jurisdiction to build a strong partnership and shape the future of watershed management and conservation in our region.

Attached, please find additional information about conservation authority consolidation and the transition process. If you have questions, need more information, or would like to book a deputation or a council information session, please contact Trish Barnett 905-895-1281 ext. 223 or t.barnett@lsrca.on.ca

Thank you for your leadership and partnership. Your participation will be essential as we work together to build a regional authority that protects and strengthens the communities we serve.

Sincerely,



Don Goodyear
Project Executive
Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority
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Conservation Authority Consolidation
Key Information
Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority

Ontario is undertaking a significant transformation of its conservation authority network, bringing together 36 existing conservation authorities to establish nine regional conservation authorities effective February 1, 2027.

As part of this provincial initiative, six conservation authorities will come together to form the new Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority: Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA), Maitland Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA), Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA), Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) and Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA).

The transition will bring together the experience, expertise and resources of these six organizations under a new regional structure, with a continued focus on watershed management, conservation and the communities they serve.

Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

To support this transformation, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks established the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to provide provincial oversight of the regional consolidation of conservation authorities.

OPCA is guiding the consolidation process, providing direction, resources and support to Project Executives and Transition Committees as they prepare for the establishment of the new regional conservation authorities. This coordinated approach is intended to support an organized transition while maintaining continuity in conservation authority programs and services.

Project Executive

To lead consolidation efforts at the local level, the province has selected a Project Executive for each region, who will become the first Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the new regional conservation authority. Project Executives are responsible for leading local transition planning and ensuring their new regional conservation authority is operational on February 1, 2027.

OPCA has appointed Don Goodyear as Project Executive and CAO Designate for the new Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority.

With 30 years of experience spanning the conservation authority and municipal government sectors, Don brings a strong record of leadership in watershed management, source water protection and environmental services. During his career, including 15 years with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, he has also led significant organizational transformation initiatives, with a focus on risk management, strategic regional programs and change management.

As the transition progresses, Don will provide updates to municipal partners and other stakeholders at key milestones, supporting continued communication and engagement as the six conservation authorities prepare to become one regional organization on February 1, 2027.

Transition Committee

Each Project Executive is being supported by a Transition Committee that will meet monthly from September to January to support the development of a Transition Plan for their region.

Each conservation authority was requested to appoint two representatives – the General Manager/CAO and a Board member, to the Transition Committee.

The Transition Committee for the Lake Huron region has begun meeting. Members provide input on how to keep stakeholders and partners informed throughout the transition process and oversee progress and provide input on the development of the Transition Plan.

Members of the Transition Committee for the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority include:

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority:

- Ray Chartrand, Board Chair & Councillor, Municipality of Huron East
- Nathan Schoelier, Acting General Manager

Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority:

- Tom Hutchinson, Board Chair & Deputy Mayor, Municipality of West Grey
- Erik Downing, General Manager, Secretary-Treasurer

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority:

- Jennifer Shaw, Board Vice Chair & Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Tim Lanthier, CAO

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority:

- Jonathan Scott, Board Chair & Councillor, Township of Bradford West Gwillimbury
- Jennifer Vincent, CAO

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority:

- Clare Riepma, Board Vice Chair & Councillor, City of Barrie
- Mark Critch, Acting CAO

Since formation of the Transition Committee, the General Manager and Board Chair for the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority have chosen not to participate. We respect their decision and thank them for their contributions.

Staff from Maitland Valley Conservation Authority continue to actively contribute through a number of transition working groups, providing subject matter expertise to support the ongoing planning process.

Watershed Councils
The province will require regional conservation authorities to establish one or more watershed councils with representation from local partners, sectors and stakeholders. The province will provide further details on the establishment, size, membership and role of these councils in 2027.

Board of Directors
The Board of Directors of the new regional conservation authority will be responsible for implementing the Transition Plan and governing the new organization to ensure business continuity.

The new Board of Directors will be appointed by single and upper tier municipalities in the region. The participating municipalities in the new Lake Huron region are:

Upper Tier

- Bruce County
- Dufferin County
- Durham Region
- Grey County
- Huron County
- Lambton County
- Middlesex County
- Perth County
- Simcoe County
- Wellington County
- York Region

Single Tier

- City of Barrie
- City of Kawartha Lakes

Recently the province consulted on a draft proposal outlining how many seats each single and upper tier municipality may have on the new regional conservation authority Boards of Directors.

Once the governance model has been finalized, municipalities will be informed of how many seats they have, to facilitate the appointment of board members **by January 31, 2027**.

To ensure conservation authorities remain operational and the transition is smooth:

- Municipalities are encouraged, where possible, to maintain their current board members on their local conservation authority board until January 31, 2027 (this is permitted under section 14 (4.2) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.
- Conservation authority boards were also directed by the province to finalize their 2027 budgets and issue apportionment invoices before February 1, 2027. This will mark the final year that lower-tier municipalities receive apportionment invoices, as beginning in 2028, invoices will be issued exclusively to participating member upper-tier and single-tier municipalities.

Next Steps
Project Executives and Transition Committees play key roles in preparing for the establishment of the new regional conservation authorities on February 1, 2027.

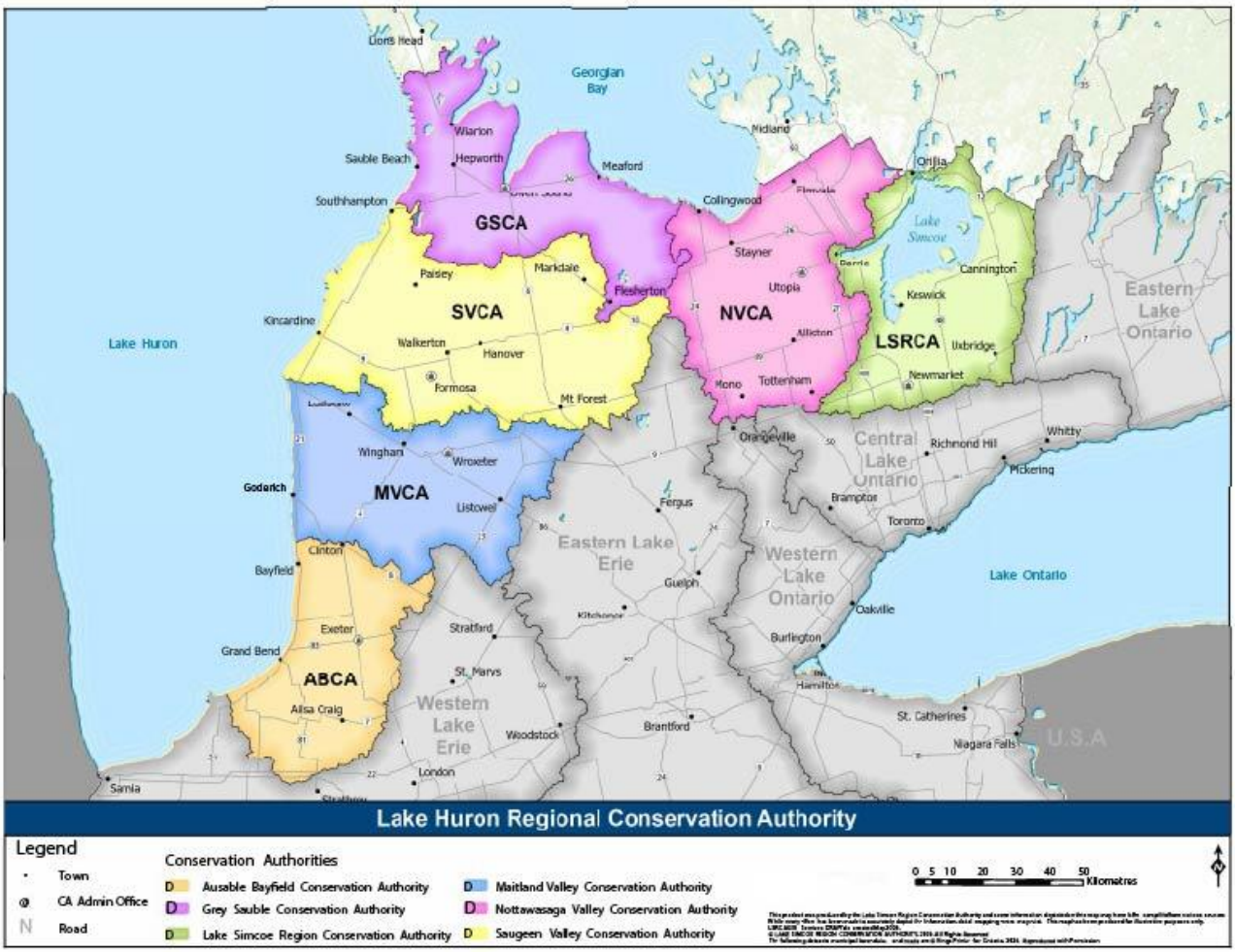
This work includes identifying and addressing immediate operational priorities to support continuity of programs and services, while also developing longer-term plans to guide organizational integration, governance and operations. Together, these efforts will support a coordinated transition and provide a foundation for the future success of the new regional conservation authorities.

Summary of Changes

Below is an at-a-glance list of what stays the same and what changes following the consolidation of conservation authorities:

Who is Affected	What Stays the Same	What Is Changing
Residents, businesses, community stakeholders	**Programs and services:** The programs and services provided by conservation authorities are not changing. **All offices will remain open:** Programs and services will continue to be delivered out of all existing offices. **Boundaries remain the same:** The consolidation will not expand existing conservation authority boundaries. Only lands currently within a conservation authority's jurisdiction will fall within the new regional conservation authority. Where a municipality is only partially within an existing conservation authority's jurisdiction, that same portion will remain within the jurisdiction of the new regional authority.	**Regional Organization**: Six conservation authorities will come together to form one organization - the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority. **Watershed Councils**: One or more watershed councils will be established with representation from local partners, sectors and stakeholders. Further provincial direction is expected in 2027.
Single-Tier Municipalities	**Participating Municipality Status:** Single-tier municipalities will continue to appoint Board members, review draft budgets and receive apportionment invoices. Conservation authority services will continue within their communities.	**Regional Governance:** Board appointments will be made to the new regional conservation authority. **Budgets and Apportionment:** Beginning with the 2028 budget, draft budgets and apportionment invoices will come from the regional authority.
Upper-Tier Municipalities (counties and regions)	**Programs and Services:** Conservation authority services will continue within their geographic areas, and existing jurisdictional boundaries will remain unchanged.	**Participating Municipality Status:** Upper-tier municipalities will become participating municipalities effective February 1, 2027.

Who is Affected	What Stays the Same	What Is Changing
		Board Appointments: They will assume responsibility for appointing members to the regional Board of Directors. **Budgets and Apportionment:** Beginning with the 2028 budget, they will receive draft budgets for review and comment and receive apportionment invoices.
Lower-Tier Municipalities (towns, townships, municipalities with upper tier counties)	**Continued Local Services:** Conservation authority programs and services will continue, with no changes to jurisdictional boundaries. Lower-tier municipalities will remain important local partners. **2027 Budget:** They will receive their 2027 budgets and apportionment invoices under the existing structure for a final time.	**Participating Municipality Status:** Lower-tier municipalities will no longer be participating municipalities effective February 1, 2027. **Watershed Councils**: To ensure local participation influences the work of the regional conservation authority, one or more watershed councils will be established with representation from local partners, sectors and stakeholders. **Board Appointments:** Responsibility will transfer to upper-tier municipalities. **Budgets and Apportionment:** Beginning with the 2028 budget, draft budgets and apportionment invoices will be directed to upper-tier municipalities.



For More Information, contact Don Goodyear, Project Executive, Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority at d.goodyear@lsrca.on.ca