

2023 Foundation Donor Impact Report



Supporting a **Green, Resilient,
Connected Tomorrow**





As we reflect on the past year, the global environmental challenges are impossible to ignore. Climate change, habitat loss, and biodiversity decline continue to impact communities worldwide. While we acknowledge our fortune in residing in a nature-rich region, the rapid growth of the population of the area places enormous pressure on our parks and greenspaces.

In response to this challenge, we are undertaking the largest fundraising campaign in our history. In April of last year, we publicly launched the Connected Campaign at Crawford Lake Conservation Area. Our goal is to raise \$20 million by 2025, to grow our 'greenprint' and provide our communities with greater opportunities to connect with nature. This campaign will not only help expand and enhance parks and greenspaces in our watershed, but also it will accelerate restoration work and make nature-based learning and outdoor recreation more available and accessible to all. Thank you to our donors and partners for being such an important part of this significant undertaking.

On June 1st, we gathered at Kelso Conservation Area for Omnia, our fifth annual fundraising gala. The event provided us with an opportunity to raise awareness and address barriers to accessing nature in our watershed. With the funds raised, we can continue to alleviate these barriers in our parks, ensuring more community members can access and enjoy these vital greenspaces. With generous support from our sponsors, donors and guests, our event was a great success. The evening's proceeds, combined with our broader fundraising initiatives, enabled us to direct \$980,150 towards Conservation Halton projects and programs over the last year.

Your generosity propels us forward. Every gift advances our mission, allowing us to fund the vital work of Conservation Halton and contribute to our shared vision for a green, resilient, connected tomorrow. With heartfelt gratitude, thank you for being a crucial part of our community and for generously supporting the foundation.

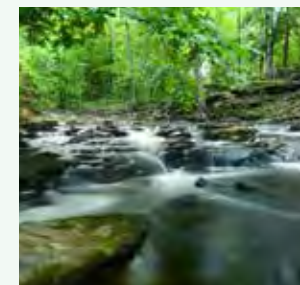

Garner Beckett
 Executive Director


Jim Sweetlove
 Board Chair

Watershed

-  Bronte Creek
-  Grindstone Creek
-  Sixteen Mile Creek
-  Urban Creeks
-  Expressway/Highway
-  Creeks & Waterbodies
-  Municipal Boundaries

02 1 46 81 0 Kilometres



A watershed is an area of land where all of the water drains into the same body of water, such as a stream, creek, river or lake. It's important to protect our watershed because the water that flows through it becomes the water that we depend on for drinking, farming, manufacturing and recreation as well as habitat for wildlife. Watersheds comes in all shapes and sizes. They can vary from millions of acres, like all the land that drains into the Great Lakes, to a few acres that drain into a pond. Conservation Halton is responsible for an area that spans more than 1000 square kilometres — and more than 650,000 people reside in our watersheds! These include the Grindstone Creek, Bronte Creek and Sixteen Mile Creek watersheds and 18 smaller urban watersheds that enter Lake Ontario.



Vision

We envision an engaged and supportive community, driven to creating a healthy environment with clean streams, abundant forests and thriving natural spaces.

Mission

Our mission is to support and advance Conservation Halton's critical environmental projects that protect our natural assets, connect people with nature and inspire change.



Values

Sustainability:

We will embody sustainability in everything we do, from the facilities we build to the communities we help plan, in an effort to limit our impact on the environment.

Diversity:

We will be a leader in supporting and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion. We value the diversity of the people and communities we serve and recognize and respect human differences and similarities.

Integrity:

We will take a proactive approach to accountability, transparency and financial responsibility and make difficult decisions with integrity.

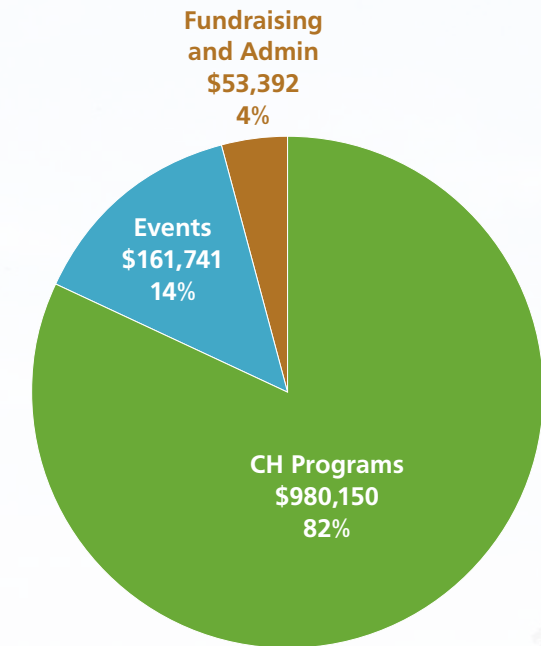
Collaboration:

We will build strong partnerships and create opportunities for collaboration with our customers and community members.

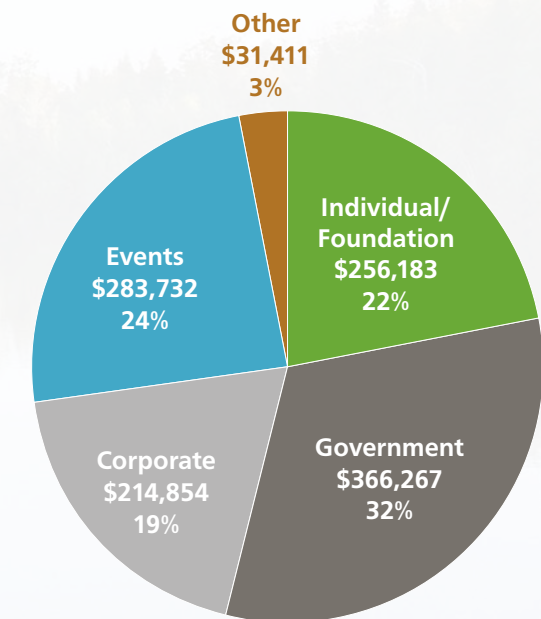


Financial Snapshot

2023 Expenses
\$1,195,283



2023 Revenues
\$1,152,447



Events & Milestones



Connected Campaign Announced

On April 28th, we gathered at Crawford Lake Conservation Area with some of our closest stakeholders and donors to celebrate the public launch of our historic fundraising campaign. Connected aims to raise \$20 million by the end of 2025, and thanks to the generosity of our community since 2020, we announced the campaign with more than 50% of our target met. Our launch event at Crawford Lake celebrated some of our major donors and highlighted transformative projects and fundraising goals aligned with our campaign's three priority areas:



Parks & Greenspaces

Grow and enhance our network of conservation parks and greenspaces to increase access to nature.



Biodiversity & Resilience

Protect native species and natural spaces to build biodiversity and local climate resilience in Halton.



Education & Community

Expand outdoor education and community-led programming to inspire learning, care, and connection.

Since publicly announcing our capital campaign last spring, we've raised an additional \$1 million through sponsorships, grants, and community donations. We are grateful to each of our supporters for helping us reach this latest milestone. Your passion and continued dedication are shaping a greener, connected, and more resilient future.



Community Tree Planting

In support of our Connected Campaign's Biodiversity & Resilience pillar, we hosted a fall tree planting at Mountsberg Conservation Area. On October 5th, community volunteers, Board members, and corporate partners from across our region came together to roll up their sleeves and make a direct positive impact on our local environment, planting 125 native trees and shrubs below the Mountsberg dam. Conservation Halton outreach staff and tree-planting experts were on hand to teach volunteers about good forest stewardship and to educate participants about the importance of native flora to the health and resilience of the Halton watershed.





Omnia Gala

Last June, the Conservation Halton Foundation held its annual fundraising gala at Kelso Conservation Area. Our event, Omnia, brought together close to 300 guests and raised over \$280,000 for projects and initiatives that are helping us create more accessible and inclusive greenspaces. We are grateful to our remarkable keynote speaker, Maayan Ziv, for her inspiring words—and to our community partners, corporate sponsors, and engaged guests for making our fifth annual fundraising gala a resounding success. Special thanks to our lead sponsors: Argo Development Corp and Mattamy Homes.



Thank You!

The Conservation Halton Foundation and Conservation Halton thank the donors, funders and sponsors whose generous contributions since 2020 have helped to raise more than \$14 million for our Connected campaign.

\$1,500,000+

Infrastructure Canada

\$1,000,000-1,499,999

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

\$500,000-999,999

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Estate of Beatrice Rose Garnet Woolsey

Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Natural Resources Canada
Parks Canada

\$250,000-499,999

Employment and Social Development Canada

Laurie Egbert & Dorothy Judith Reed

RBC Foundation

\$100,000-249,999

ARGO Development Corporation

Hamilton Halton Brant Regional Tourism Association

In the Spirit Giving Foundation

Mattamy Homes

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

\$50,000-99,999

407 ETR

Distrikt Capital Corporation

Greenbelt Foundation

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Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation

Peter Gilgan Foundation

The Remington Group

\$25,000-\$49,999

Arbor Day Foundation

Burlington Community Foundation

Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities

Catherine Donnelly Foundation

CBM Event Productions

Cogeco Connexion

Dufferin Aggregates

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Fitzhenry Family Foundation

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\$10,000-24,999

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David Schaeffer Engineering Ltd.

Diamond Tree Care

Eaton

Fieldgate Developments

Gardiner Roberts LLP

GEI Consultants

GEI Consultants

GEO Morphix Ltd.

Great Lakes Local Action Fund

Kevin Watson

Liberty Power

Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism

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Tree Canada

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Urbantech Consulting Ltd.

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Woodbine Cares

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William Marshall

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This list includes funding agencies and in-kind donors whose contributions were made directly to Conservation Halton.



Parks & Greenspaces

Renewed Spaces for Learning and Recreation at Mountsberg

With its beautiful trails, natural playground, resident farm animals and raptors, and public and school programs, Mountsberg Conservation Area offers activities for people of all ages to enjoy. This year-round destination for learning and family fun recently unveiled a series of upgrades across the park—made possible by our generous community of supporters.

In spring, funds from the Douglas B. Cockburn endowment allowed for the refurbishment of Mountsberg’s Pioneer Boardwalk. The new boardwalk and connecting dock provide visitors with beautiful views of the reservoir and safe access to the water for activities such as canoeing, kayaking and fishing.

In the park’s ‘Cameron Courtyard’, grant funding secured through the Connected Campaign helped to transform this central space. The project culminated in the summer with new sustainable landscaping, the addition of a raised firepit for community gathering, new features at the natural playground, and brand-new coops for Mountsberg’s chickens.

Before the year ended, corporate donor NPM Construction helped to extend, repair and resurface the Sugarbush Trail, just in time for Christmas Town’s horse-drawn wagon rides. This generous in-kind contribution has significantly enhanced the park for visitors and created a safer working environment for Conservation Halton staff and their animal co-workers!



Sculptures Added to Crawford Lake’s Species-at-Risk Trail

Crawford Lake’s school programs educate more than 32,000 students each year about cultural history, natural heritage, and the remarkable beauty and biological diversity of the Niagara Escarpment. Almost every school tour includes an inspiring walk along the Species at Risk Trail. With larger-than-life carvings, this immersive forest path introduces visitors to some of our region’s rare, threatened, and endangered species, and it’s a tool that helps educators teach children about the steps we can take as individuals, and as a community, to protect local biodiversity. Thanks to the generous support of our donors and sponsors, this educational trail was enhanced in 2023 with two new sculptures. Carved by local Indigenous chainsaw sculpture artists Robbin and Laura Wenzoski, the most recent installations join eight existing sculptural works to honour Black Ash, grassland songbirds including the Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark, Jefferson Salamander, Snapping Turtle, and other species.

Accessibility Improvements at Kelso

Kelso Conservation Area has undergone several transformative enhancements in the past year. With funds raised at our 2023 Omnia gala, Conservation Halton purchased new all-terrain wheelchairs and mobile-accessible mats to help visitors with mobility disabilities safely access the park’s trails and beachfront. Compliance with AODA standards guided the renovations of one park washroom, made possible by a grant from the Government of Canada’s Enabling Accessibility Fund. The installation of accessible doors and ramps significantly improves the overall park experience for visitors using a mobility device. Accessibility improvements will continue at Kelso in 2024 and beyond, with a park-wide assessment recently conducted to identify remaining barriers and plan innovative solutions that will foster more inclusive outdoor experiences at this popular park.



Biodiversity & Resilience

Engaging Local Residents in Ecological Restoration

With funding from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Conservation Halton is leading a four-year initiative to engage communities in restoration projects that improve habitat quality for native freshwater fish, including Redside Dace, Silver Shiner and American Eel. During its second year (2023), the project resulted in significant habitat improvements along Sixteen Mile Creek. The removal of a large weir has enhanced water quality and flow; fish can now move safely through a stretch of the creek that was previously impeded. The project team also restored more than 1,950 metres of creek-side habitat with the support of community members. Restoration workdays generated 166 volunteer hours and together, staff and volunteers planted 1,458 native trees and shrubs and 50 lbs of seeds!



Rural Land Stewardship and Community Engagement

Conservation Halton works closely with the agricultural community to promote environmental management practices and projects that improve ecosystem health in rural areas. With generous funding from Woodbine Cares, Conservation Halton's restoration team engaged with more than a dozen agricultural landowners in 2023 to implement habitat improvement and best management projects across 25+ hectares. This work included the planting of 440 native trees and shrubs to strengthen riparian buffers and increase biodiversity, cover cropping to prevent erosion and improve soil integrity, the removal of invasive species, and two stream restoration projects that enhanced aquatic habitat. Funding also enabled Conservation Halton to participate in community networking and knowledge-sharing events coordinated by the Halton Soil and Crop Improvement Association, the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture, and the Burlington Rural Forum.

Growing Healthy Forests in the Bronte Creek Watershed

Last spring, 407 ETR partnered with the Conservation Halton Foundation to sponsor a three-year restoration project in the Bronte Creek watershed. Focused on large-scale tree planting and invasive species management, the project is enhancing and expanding the local forest canopy to support biodiversity and long-term climate resilience. As part of year-one activities, Conservation Halton's forestry team planted 11,000 seedlings with the goal of restoring 20 acres of forest habitat by 2026. The partnership also created opportunities for employee engagement. In early June, 407 ETR employees joined Conservation Halton staff for a marsh-edge underplanting at Mountsberg. Volunteers planted 150 native trees and shrubs along the watershed boundary between Mountsberg and Kilbride Creeks—both of which flow into Bronte Creek—to help grow the forest canopy in this local watershed.



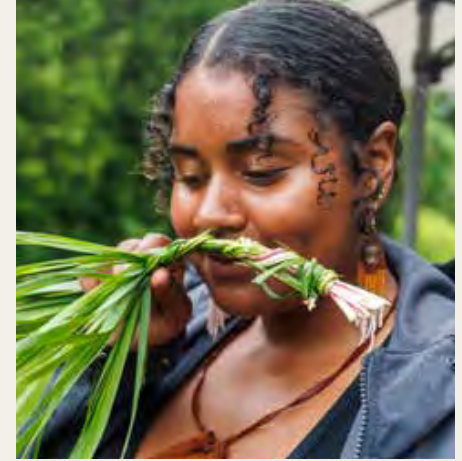
Education & Community

Welcoming New Raptors to Mountsberg

The Mountsberg Raptor Centre is an educational facility home to 30 permanent raptor residents. Each year, the centre engages thousands of visitors through programs that cultivate respect for birds of prey and foster learning. Donations made through our Adopt-a-Raptor program support our centre’s educational mandate and help us ensure the best possible welfare for our many resident birds, providing them with a wholesome diet, veterinary care, training, and enrichment. In 2023, with the support of our donors, we were able to welcome three new feathered friends to the centre: Hero the Lanner Falcon, Duncan the Western Screech Owl, and Queen the Ferruginous Hawk! With Hero’s help, we launched Falcon Flight—an educational program offering guests a thrilling close-up experience of a falcon’s speed and agility. We also dedicated more hours to training our birds in voluntary husbandry behaviors (such as learning how to stand on a weigh scale!) to help us monitor their health and wellbeing at the centre.

“ We proudly support the education and conservation efforts at Mountsberg. Mountsberg is a unique place, inspiring curiosity, respect and compassion for nature and the birds who call it home.

- Monica Garamszeghy and Dave Thomas, Adopt-a-Raptor Donors



16th Annual Halton Children’s Water Festival

Last September marked the beginning of a new relationship with Wilfrid Laurier University, who became a program partner and sponsor of the 16th annual Halton Children’s Water Festival at Kelso Conservation Area. Over four festival days, 3,654 elementary students participated in an incredible 10,962 hours of hands-on learning at 60 unique activity stations, discovering the vital significance of water as our most precious resource. The event engaged 600+ high school students, who volunteered as passionate activity presenters and role models to their younger peers.

Co-hosted with Halton Region since 2006 and delivered in partnership with local municipalities and school boards, our popular festival continues to grow in reach and impact each year. We extend our gratitude to the Region and to our 2023 event partners and sponsors—David Schaeffer Engineering Ltd, GEO Morphix, R.V. Anderson Associates Ltd, City of Burlington, Town of Halton Hills, Town of Oakville, Halton Catholic District School Board, Halton District School Board, and Wilfrid Laurier University—for helping us bring this essential outdoor learning experience to thousands of local students.

Cultivating Connection at the Medicine Garden

Established in 2021, Crawford Lake’s Mashkiki Gitigan (Medicine Garden) provides Indigenous communities with access to traditional foods and medicines, and it helps thousands of public visitors learn about Indigenous food sovereignty, heritage seed saving, and the resilience of traditional Indigenous agricultural practices. In 2023, funding from the Burlington Community Foundation made possible a series of garden enhancements at the site, carried out in collaboration with Ojibiikaan Indigenous Cultural Network and Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre. Together, we strengthened the garden’s growing structures, installed an irrigation system and added a netted roof. These upgrades contributed to our most successful harvest to date. More than 190 Indigenous community members visited the Mashkiki Gitigan and neighbouring Three Sisters Garden to harvest foods and medicines, such as corn, beans, squash, tobacco, mullein, and sweetgrass.

With additional support from donors and sponsors, the gardens at Crawford Lake were also host to food sovereignty events throughout the year, including a day of Indigenous ceremony and three public workshops on National Indigenous Peoples Day.

Thank You to Our 2023 Donors and Supporters

ESCARPMENT (100,000+)

Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk
Employment and Social Development Canada
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
RBC Foundation

LAKE (\$50,000 – \$99,999)

407 ETR
ARGO Development Corporation
Mattamy Homes
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WATERSHED

(\$25,000 – \$49,999)

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Jenkins Soil Mixtures
Nick Kavassalis
Marianne Meed - Ward
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Garner Beckett
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Sarah Macdonald
Development Officer

Michelle Rehn
Administrative Assistant/Corporate Reception

Imran Javer
Funding and Grants Project Coordinator

Robyn Koutrouliotis
Administrative Assistant, Office of the President & CEO/FOI Coordinator



905.336.1158 | foundation@hrca.on.ca
2596 Britannia Road West, Burlington, Ontario L7P 0G3
conservationhalton.ca/foundation