

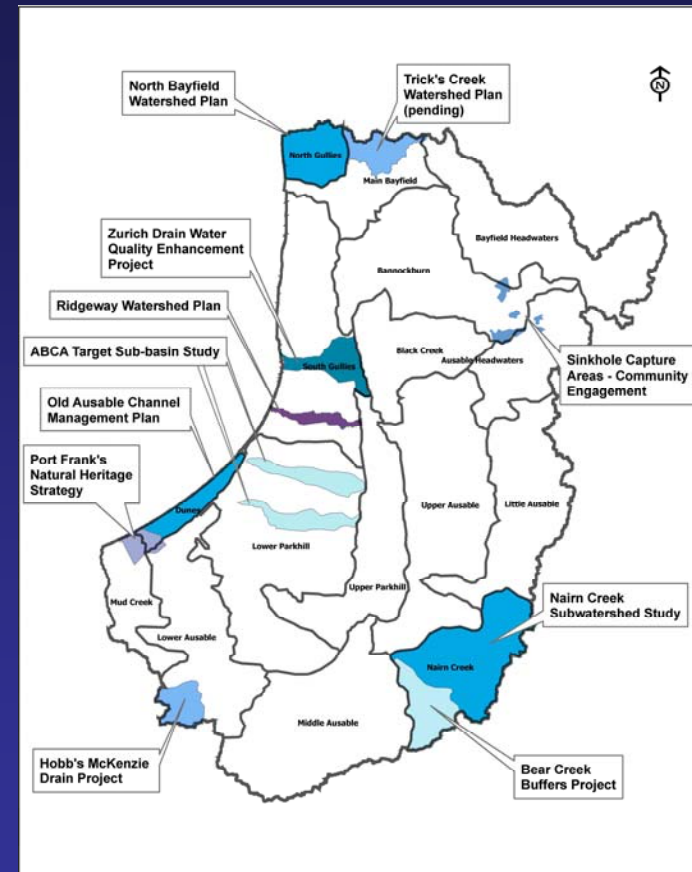
Follow up to January Watershed Report Card Presentation *(January 13, 2011)*

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for Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA)

The Conservation Strategy Development Team wanted to take a closer look at the Watershed Report Card Grades and find out who is accessing programs and supporting stewardship practices. Also, there is a need to publicize what is working. This is Mari's report to show where projects have happened and what worked.

Watershed Community Action Plans

- Water Quality Improvement Watersheds
 - Target Sub-basin project (1980s)
 - Hobbs McKenzie Drain (2003 to 2005)
 - Sinkhole Capture Areas – Tuckersmith (2005)
- Fish Habitat Sub-watershed Plans
 - Nairn Creek (2002)
- Community Ambassadors
 - Zurich and Ridgeway Drain Water Quality Enhancement (2006 and 2007, 2010 and 2011)
 - Bear Creek (2008)
- Watershed Management Strategy
 - Old Ausable Channel (2006 to 2008)
 - Port Franks (2010-2011)
 - Bayfield North Watershed Plan (2009)



What 'worked'?

- Depends on what is meant by the term worked, I define this as getting water quality improvement projects completed.
- When I first started in Nairn Creek (2002), I was hoping for key stream-side enhancement projects – these happened – this was successful.
- In Zurich and North Bayfield, I aimed for one (1) project per square km. So in Zurich, I aimed to complete 25 projects. Over the project period 20 projects were completed. In North Bayfield I aimed for 40 projects and at least 35 projects were completed.

What seems to help?

- Community ambassadors (local people calling neighbours)
- Incentive dollars and technical support in the early Target Basin studies
- One- to-one visits
- Involving people in fish, turtle or water quality studies
- In some cases (area North of Bayfield), public meetings but in some cases (Ridgeway) this was not encouraged

What seems to be a barrier for people to uptake improvement projects?

- In Hobbs Mackenzie – there was a perception of too much government involvement
 - In Zurich Drain, 20 projects were completed but there were 25 projects that remain at the 'identified' stage, the lack of completion is likely due to:
 - a) Inadequate funding (25% of these financially-restricted projects are manure storage upgrade projects);
 - b) Feeling that there is not a problem (i.e., no drains on their property);
 - c) Feeling outside the norm in a small agricultural community;
 - d) A difficulty understanding why these actions are necessary now; or
 - e) A matter of age (i.e., some landowners feel they are too old and that it does not make economic sense for them to invest in environmental solutions).
- In the bigger picture however, these are minor issues compared to a lack of willingness to become engaged in an environmental enhancement process such as those that had no interest in having a one to one stewardship visit.

Next Steps

- Continue to work with people that form community groups to improve local creeks
- In 2011, ABCA and the Huron County Federation of Agriculture received \$500,000 from OMAFRA to evaluate watershed water quality improvement projects in the North Bayfield, Ridgeway and Zurich areas