

Ridgeway Drain Water Quality Improvement Project

Objectives

The overall goal of the Ridgeway (also called the Kading Drain) Project is to improve water quality in this area.

To meet this goal a number of approaches are going to be used which include stewardship, communication and assessment.

The most important approach, stewardship, refers to the actions taken “on the ground” that prevent pollutants from entering the water system. These stewardship actions will vary depending on your location, soil type, land use practice, etc.

Communication with the landowners in the Ridgeway Drain watershed is important to identify potential pollution sources and to begin to undertake beneficial management practices.

Assessment (water quality monitoring) will be used to determine how effective the stewardship activities are.

Why Ridgeway Drain?

This project is going to focus on an area with “natural” boundaries – the Ridgeway Drain watershed. This watershed is essentially the area just east of the town of Dashwood west to the Lake, where the drain outlets between the Ridgeway and Norman Heights subdivisions (see back). It is important to work on a drainage basin in order to identify potential issues that may influence the drain.

This area was chosen because there has been ongoing interest by members in the community to improve water quality and the drain has historical water quality information. It is important to understand that water quality issues are sometimes related to many small, seemingly unimportant events. Working at the watershed scale helps to identify minor issues and solutions.

What is a stewardship visit?

A stewardship visit is a site visit by Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) staff to help you identify areas in which you could make improvements on your property to help improve water quality. ABCA staff will provide technical assistance, provide publications for beneficial management practices (BMPs), provide help with Environmental Farm Plan (if requested), and help access grants to help pay for projects.

What type of projects can I do?

Projects may include but are not limited to well and septic upgrades, erosion and runoff control (e.g., grass waterways, berms, eavestroughs, buffers), improved cropping methods, manure management, tree planting and wetland restoration. Undertaking any project is voluntary.

Funding

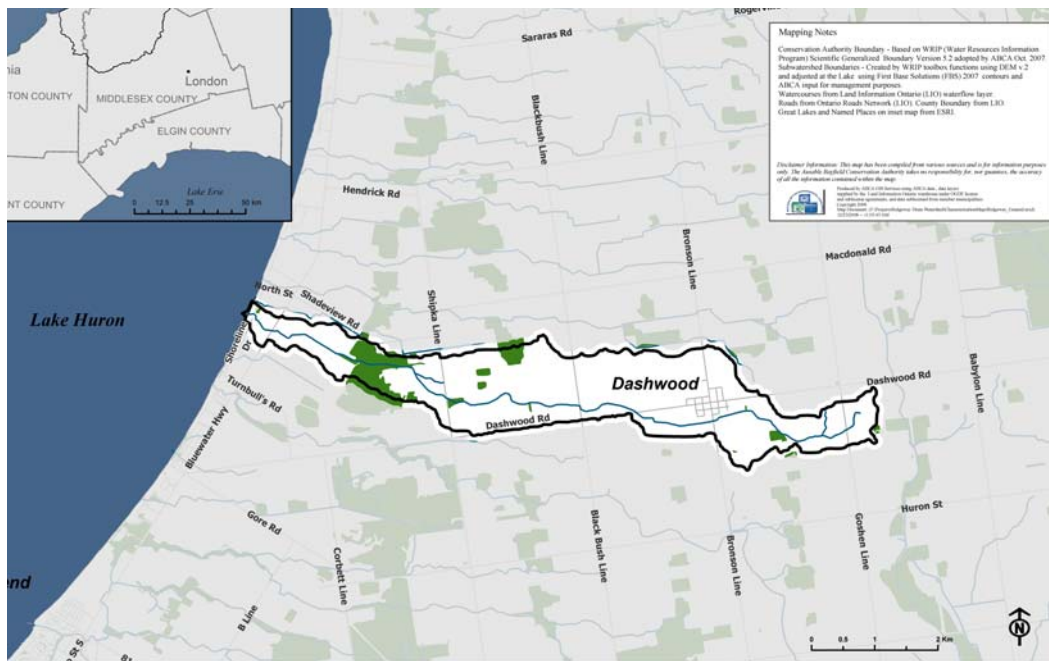
The project is being coordinated by the ABCA, who is partnering with the Bluewater Shoreline Residents' Association (BSRA), Grand Bend Rotary, Freshwater Future and the Ministry of the Environment (MOE)

Funding for on the ground improvements may come from the Huron Clean Water Project, Environmental Farm Plan, and the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. Grant amounts vary from program to program, but these programs can be combined to achieve the highest cost share percentage.

Water Quality

Water samples will be collected at six locations within the watershed at upstream and downstream locations. These samples will be collected once a month (April to November) and after rain events, and will be analyzed for E. coli, nitrates, phosphorus, and suspended sediment.

Water quality data collected by the ABCA may be presented to watershed residents however, monitoring locations are kept confidential. Please note that the monitoring process is used to determine the effectiveness of the program, and not to target landowners.



Ridgeway Drain Watershed