



brant
waterways
foundation

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024



**37 Years
of Connecting
People to
Healthy
Waterways**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2024 has been a year marked by challenges, meaningful progress, and bold opportunities. It reminds us not only of the importance of celebrating our success but also of the critical role Brant Waterways Foundation continues to play in connecting people with healthy waterways, but also the need to acknowledge our limitations as we strive to make lasting, positive change in our community.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Cowan Foundation, we were able to partner with the City of Brantford to improve accessibility along the SC Johnson Trail, grading and applying new stone dust between Lafayette Avenue and Hardy Road. This project also saw thoughtful community engagement around the protection of turtle nesting sites and was successfully completed in the fall of 2024.

In partnership with the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), we proudly celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Grand River's Canadian Heritage River designation. This milestone invited us to reflect on the decades of work that have gone into improving the health of the river, while also recognizing the challenges that remain. The warming of cold-water tributaries and rising nitrate levels continue to threaten water quality. These persistent issues serve as a call to action and as a reminder that collective efforts from organizations like ours are essential, especially as the GRCA faces growing constraints.

While we celebrated some important wins this year, we also encountered setbacks on major Trail Improvement and River Access (TIRA) projects. Staffing shortages led to delays on the D'Aubigny Creek River Access project and the Waterworks Park Ecological Study in Brantford. In Brant County, significant archaeological concerns resulted in the cancellation of the Newport Bridge River Access project, a lost opportunity to strengthen connections between Brant County and Six Nations via Chiefswood Park. These experiences underscore the complexities of working on public lands in partnership with municipalities, particularly in a time of increasing regulatory and financial pressure.

Despite these hurdles, Brant Waterways Foundation continued to deliver strong, community-based programs. We remain proud supporters of the GRCA's Children's Water Festival, helping hundreds of elementary students build awareness around conservation and water stewardship. Our Day Pass Library Program, offered through Brantford and Brant County Public Libraries, also continues to make nature more accessible to local families looking to explore our natural heritage.

One of our most inspiring initiatives remains our community tree planting efforts. Each year, thousands of trees are planted through the Brant Tree Coalition, enriching our urban canopy and deepening our community's connection to nature. This work is possible thanks to the passion and leadership of Chuck Beach, whose collaboration with the GRCA, the City of Brantford, Brant County, and local high schools continues to serve as a model of efficiency, dedication, and community spirit.

These efforts, big and small, would not be possible without the generosity of our donors and the commitment of our volunteer board. This year's Forks on the Grand gala at Winney Mills raised \$56,000, a clear testament to the strength of our community and the value placed on the work we do. It's a reflection of the trust people continue to place in Brant Waterways to protect, preserve and enhance the natural heritage that makes our region special.

Looking ahead, perhaps the most exciting opportunity in years has emerged through the proposed North of the Nith project. Initiated by the Brant Cycling Club and the County of Brant, and rooted in past Waterways TIRA engagements, the 200+ acres in Paris has the potential to become a cornerstone of environmental restoration and recreation for the region. Brant Waterways is proud to be identified as a key community stakeholder in this generational project. Success will require vision, cooperation, and resilience as well as simply learning from both the challenges we've faced and the successes we've had.

As we look ahead to 2025, our focus will be on continuing to deliver consistent, meaningful programs, supporting our municipal partners in advancing TIRA projects, and working collaboratively to reduce the risks inherent in ambitious new initiatives like North of the Nith. Success here will require not just effort and leadership, but a willingness to build new partnerships and reimagine how we work with existing ones to better share the load and strengthen our collective impact.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we continue to connect our community to healthy waterways and our natural heritage.

Dana Darnbrough



President of Brant Waterways Foundation



Dana Darnbrough
President

Brant Waterways Foundation
Photo Credit:
Courtesy of Tom Wilson

2024 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2024 Brant Waterways Board of Directors

BRANT WATERWAYS FOUNDATION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of December 31, 2024	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and bank	93,970	219,024
HST receivable	12,991	7,530
Prepaid expenses	2,653	2,653
Current portion of long-term investments	200,000	200,000
	309,614	429,207
Long-term Investments	1,178,279	913,448
	1,487,893	1,342,655
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	12,052	4,935
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,100,841	1,337,720
Restricted Net Assets (Note 4)	375,000	-
	1,475,841	1,337,720
	1,487,893	1,342,655

BRANT WATERWAYS FOUNDATION STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

For the year ended December 31	2024	2023
Revenue		
Donations	94,939	104,003
Event income	71,002	58,190
Investment income	51,532	45,230
Grant - City of Brantford	1,043	9,312
Brant Tree Coalition Grant	12,915	11,500
	231,251	228,235
Expenses		
Administration	13,225	14,466
Event Dinner and Expenses	23,679	24,438
Insurance	2,993	2,676
Interest and bank charges	450	313
Office, postage and general	3,467	3,546
Professional fees	6,945	2,191
Project grants ~ GRCA	5,000	5,000
Tree Planting	47,623	7,573
	103,382	60,203
Excess of Revenue over Expenses Before Undernoted Item	127,869	168,032
Gain/(Loss) on change in fair value of investments	10,252	(201)
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	138,121	167,831

Dana Darnbrough
President

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*Six Nations of the Grand River
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Chuck Beach
Brant Tree Coalition

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Christine Fournier
Board Coordinator

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

Brant Tree Coalition



Brant Tree Coalition

The Brant Tree Coalition, through a number of community events, was able to co-ordinate the planting of 5,200 native trees and shrubs in 2024. Since inception, over 128,000 native trees and shrubs have been planted in Brantford and Brant County. Community events are not only great for engaging local citizens in environmental stewardship, the end result are of significant value to the natural environment.

Planting events are carried out in the spring and the fall as these are the times of year, when there is the best possibility of survival for trees and shrubs that are left to Mother Nature for watering. A wet spring and consistent rains throughout the summer helped compensate for the drought like conditions in late August and September.

Spring 2024

- **e3 at the New Forest** – garbage collection, tree guard maintenance and creek cleanout.
- **9th Annual Brant County Community Tree Plant – Jacob's Wood, St. George (April 20th)** – Over 200 County residents planted 475 trees to help restore the forested area at the Woods.
- **15th Annual Brant Tree Coalition High School Tree Plant – Brant Conservation Area (April 22nd)** – Over 530 students from area high school planted over 2140 trees.
- **11th Annual Brantford Community Tree Plant (April 27th)** – Around 240 Brantford residents were on hand on a very rainy day at Brier Park (1,000) trees.
- **Annual Rotary Tree Plant – May 4th – Rotary Park (Veterans Memorial Parkway)** (250 trees)

Fall 2024

- **Brant County Fall Tree Plant** – residents from the County added 400 native trees and shrubs near the entrance to Burford Lion's Park.
- **Plant the Parks (Brantford)** – At Echo Park, the East Ward /Echo Park Neighbourhood Association and the local community added a forested area to the park with 350 trees.
- At Dufferin Park with the support of the Holmedale Neighbourhood Association, 151 trees were added to the recently opened Dufferin Park.
- **TD Tree Days** – took place at the New Forest in the City where 350 trees were planted.
- **BCI STEM Club at the New Forest** – toured the forest and planted 50 Black Walnut trees.
- **Fifty Black Walnut seedlings** provided by the Forest Gene Conservation Association and were planted by Brant Tree Coalition volunteers.



e3 Pauline Johnson Environmental Class along with other volunteers at the 11th Annual Brantford Community Tree Plant at Brier Park on April 27th.



Paris District Highschool Students at the April 20th Tree Plant at Jacob's Woods in St. George



Rotary Tree Plant
May 4, 2024 at Rotary Park
Veterans Memorial Parkway



11th Annual Brantford Community Tree Plant on April 27, 2024 at Brier Park
Photo Credit: Tom Wilson



Brant County Fall Tree Plant
October 19, 2024 at Burford Lion's Park

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

'Forks on the Grand' Raises over \$56,000!

We are delighted to share that our 2024 annual gala fundraiser, 'Forks on the Grand', held on Wednesday, May 15th at Paris Beer Company and Wincey Mills in Paris, was a resounding success! This signature evening continues to attract strong support and remains a cornerstone of our fundraising efforts.

Thanks to the incredible generosity and support of attendees, sponsors and donors, over \$56,000 was raised in support of Brant Waterways' environmental initiatives, and our trail and river access projects.

Brant Waterways was fortunate to secure a WestJet donation of a trip for two anywhere WestJet flies. Raffle tickets were sold in person and remotely to individuals from PEI to Vancouver Island raising \$4,115.00 for the organization. The winning ticket belonged to Dennis Touesnard of Brantford, drawn at the 'Forks on the Grand' event. Congratulations and thank you to all who purchased tickets!

We wish to thank all of our incredible sponsors for this event that helps make the 2024 gala such a financial success; Crystal Homes, APEX Chain and Cable, Mike Yarek Dodge Chrysler Limited, Dr. Willem R. Bouma, Riverside Heating & Air Conditioning, Sifton Properties Ltd., ARK Electrical, Beckett-Glaves Family Funeral Centre, Brantford Toyota, Brooks Signs, Calbeck Investments, Gates Canada, Grandbridge Energy, Matthew Hendrie of TD Bank Investments, Valhalla Mortgages.

Once again, our May fundraiser featured a fabulous Raffle and Silent Auction, made possible through the generous contributions of local businesses. We are truly grateful for their continued support of our trails and waterways. These donations, along with sponsorships, play a vital role in the overall success of the event and directly enhance Brant Waterways' capacity to fund important projects.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported our annual gala in support of local trails and waterways — your participation helped make it a great success!



Heritage River Festival

The River Heritage Festival took place on Sunday, September 22nd and celebrated the 30th Anniversary of the Grand River being designated a Canadian Heritage River. The festival was held at the Brant Conservation Area & celebrated the Grand River & its major tributaries - the Conestogo, Eramosa, Nith & Speed rivers. The designation recognizes the cultural & natural heritage & recreational opportunities along the rivers. Brant Waterways was pleased to host a booth at the event, offering a valuable opportunity to engage with the community and connect with individuals who regularly enjoy our rivers and trails. The event served as a meaningful platform to promote water-based recreation and highlight the cultural and environmental significance of the Grand River and its tributaries.



Board Members
Sandra Cooke &
Lisa Rafferty in
our Waterways
photo booth.

Our Summer Photo Contest

The annual Summer Photo Contest marked its third consecutive year in 2024, running from July 1st through August 31st. Once again, the contest delivered an exceptional collection of photographs, showcasing the talent and creativity of community members who explored and captured the beauty of our trails, parks, and waterways throughout the season. We were truly inspired by the number of participants and the quality of submissions this year. It was a pleasure to see so many individuals and families enjoying the outdoors and documenting their experiences in such compelling ways. Thank you to everyone who participated by sharing their stunning images—we appreciate your enthusiasm and support. A special congratulations to our 2024 Summer Photo Contest winners!

North of the Nith Launch

2024 saw the kick off of North of the Nith in Paris through the County of Brant, consultants Scatliff & Miller & Murray alongside community stakeholders, such as Brant Waterways Foundation.

Phase 1 of the project was intended to “learn from the land and the people” with an environmental and site conditions assessment on the property and in person and online community engagement. The outcomes of the property assessment and feedback from the community will feed into phase 2 and 3 in 2025, which will see the development of a master plan and formal vision.

Brant Waterways Foundation is incredibly excited to be a part of a transformational community project like North of the Nith.

For more information please visit <https://engagebrant.ca/northofthenith>

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

Brant Waterways Foundation gratefully acknowledges the generous support of individuals and organizations who share our commitment to a vibrant and healthy Grand River watershed. Their contributions are instrumental in advancing the goals of our TIRA (Trail Improvement & River Access) campaign—an initiative focused on enhancing public access to our natural spaces and promoting community health and well-being through stronger connections to our waterways.

In 2024, in addition to the valued support from our TIRA campaign donors, we are especially thankful for generous financial contributions from a number of community partners and supporters including;

- Brant Community Foundation
- Cornerstone Church
- Cowan Foundation
- GFL Environmental
- J.H. Young & Sons Jewelers
- Loblaw's
- RBC Granting Foundation
- The Roger & Edith Davis Foundation
- The Rotary Club of Brantford
- Stephen Smith & Dorothy Woltz Foundation
- Stubbes Precast

We are deeply grateful for all contributions, including those made in memory or in honour of loved ones, as well as the generous online donations received through Canada Helps and the PayPal Giving Fund.



1st Place
Congratulations to k8ee_bee



2nd Place
Congratulations to infitasma



3rd Place
Congratulations to Elsie Pujalte



Our Vision

We envision a community in which everyone benefits from a connection to our healthy waterways and trails, and works collaboratively to protect and preserve our natural resources.

Our Mission

Brant Waterways Foundation seeks to:

Provide funding assistance and advocacy to projects in Brantford, Brant County and Six Nations of the Grand River that enhance, restore, protect and preserve our natural heritage of the Grand River, its waterways and adjacent lands to provide recreational opportunities, a healthy environment and sustainable use.

Our Values

We are defined and motivated by the following values:

Accountability: We are honest and transparent in all our activities and are accountable to our partners, donors, supporters and the communities we serve.

Collaboration: We strive to build and strengthen community partnerships in order to share ideas and resources and to better achieve our common goals.

Inclusivity: We respect the strengths and sentiments of diverse groups and individuals in our local communities and value their efforts in helping further our mandate.

Guardianship: We are committed stewards of our natural resources and actively work to create positive change that will ensure the protection of the environment.

Sustainability: We focus on worthwhile, viable projects that will accrue long-term benefits to the community and promote enjoyment of the local Grand River watershed now and for generations to come.

Our History and Impact

Brant Waterways is a charitable non-profit Foundation, established in 1988, whose objective is to provide funding assistance for projects that protect and enhance the Grand River and adjacent lands in Brant County, Brantford and Six Nations of the Grand River.

The Grand River and its major tributaries – the Conestogo, Eramosa, Nith and Speed Rivers – were designated ‘Canadian Heritage Rivers’ in 1994. The designation recognizes the outstanding human heritage values and excellent recreational opportunities along the rivers and encourages the public to enjoy and appreciate them.

Brant Waterways inspired and helped fund the conversion of flood control dikes, abandoned rail lines and other trails into a river-based passive recreational trail system. Natural habitat restoration, tree planting, water and environmental education activities and the development/enhancement of river access points for people to safely experience the river are among the many other initiatives supported.

To date, more than \$5 million has been invested in our local communities, spearheaded by Brant Waterways Foundation’s commitment and efforts in the areas of advocacy, fundraising and collaboration with visionary funding partners.

To Donate to Brant Waterways Foundation

We welcome and sincerely appreciate donations of all amounts. All contributions are eligible for charitable tax receipts. To learn more or to make a donation, please visit www.brantwaterways.ca or contact us at info@brantwaterways.ca or (519) 770 – 6000.