

**From:** [Karen Armstrong](#)  
**To:** [Eowyn Spencer](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: GRCA To Terminate Nature Education Centres On Friday, November 24th?  
**Date:** Thursday, November 23, 2023 12:06:44 PM  
**Attachments:** [Agenda Package - GRCA General Membership Meeting Nov24 2023.pdf](#)

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**From:** Kevin Thomason

**Date:** November 23, 2023 at 12:33:50 AM EST

**To:** Sandy Shantz <[SShantz@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:SShantz@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Sue Foxton <[SFoxton@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:SFoxton@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Natasha Salonen <[NSalonen@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:NSalonen@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Colleen James <[CJames@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:CJames@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Jim Erb <[JErb@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:JErb@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Pam Wolf <[PWolf@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:PWolf@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Kari Williams <[KariWilliams@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:KariWilliams@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Doug Craig <[DougCraig@regionofwaterloo.ca](mailto:DougCraig@regionofwaterloo.ca)>, Mike Devine <[devinem@cambridge.ca](mailto:devinem@cambridge.ca)>, [gordon.greavette@rogers.com](mailto:gordon.greavette@rogers.com)

**Subject: GRCA To Terminate Nature Education Centres On Friday, November 24th?**

Mayor Shantz, Mayor Foxton, Mayor Salonen, Councillor James, Councillor Erb, Councillor Williams, Councillor Wolf, Councillor Craig, Councillor Devine, and Dr. Greavette,

I am reaching out to you since you are on the GRCA Board of Directors as representatives of Waterloo Region and our municipalities.

It has just been learned in the community by the release of the latest agenda for Friday's GRCA Board Meeting that it appears that the decision to terminate and close the Nature Education Centres enjoyed by thousands of school children each year has been moved up from January 2024 to this Friday, November 24th.

Even more troubling, it appears that only efforts to save Apps Mills Nature Centre have been undertaken by Brantford representatives with seemingly no visible efforts by any Waterloo Region GRCA Board Members or elected officials to try to find funding and save the Laurel Creek Nature Centre in Waterloo Region that is so integral to the outdoor education of our youth.

These outdoor programs are sometimes the only outdoor education and experiences many children have in our increasingly urban communities. We are in a climate crisis and our youth need a greater understanding of nature and our planet - not seeing these programs cut due to a minor funding gap that could easily be addressed with similar efforts being undertaken in other areas.

Our community is outraged and fear that these program cuts are just the beginning as the GRCA will next seek to sell off and dispose of these nature centre areas to raise funds and meet the demands of the provincial government to identify lands by December 2024 to be sold off to developers for housing - despite the fact that it is broadly acknowledged that there is no land shortage and that destroying environmentally significant lands will not solve our current housing challenges in any

way.

Please respond with what you are doing to speak up for our children, our communities, and save these vital outdoor education programs and centres. Time is of the essence if we only have 48 hours to come up with solutions for our children.

Thank you.

Kevin.

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