



Grand River Conservation Authority

Human Heritage Policy

**Approved by the Grand River Conservation Authority
Planning and Operations Committee
March 22, 2005
General Membership
April 1, 2005**

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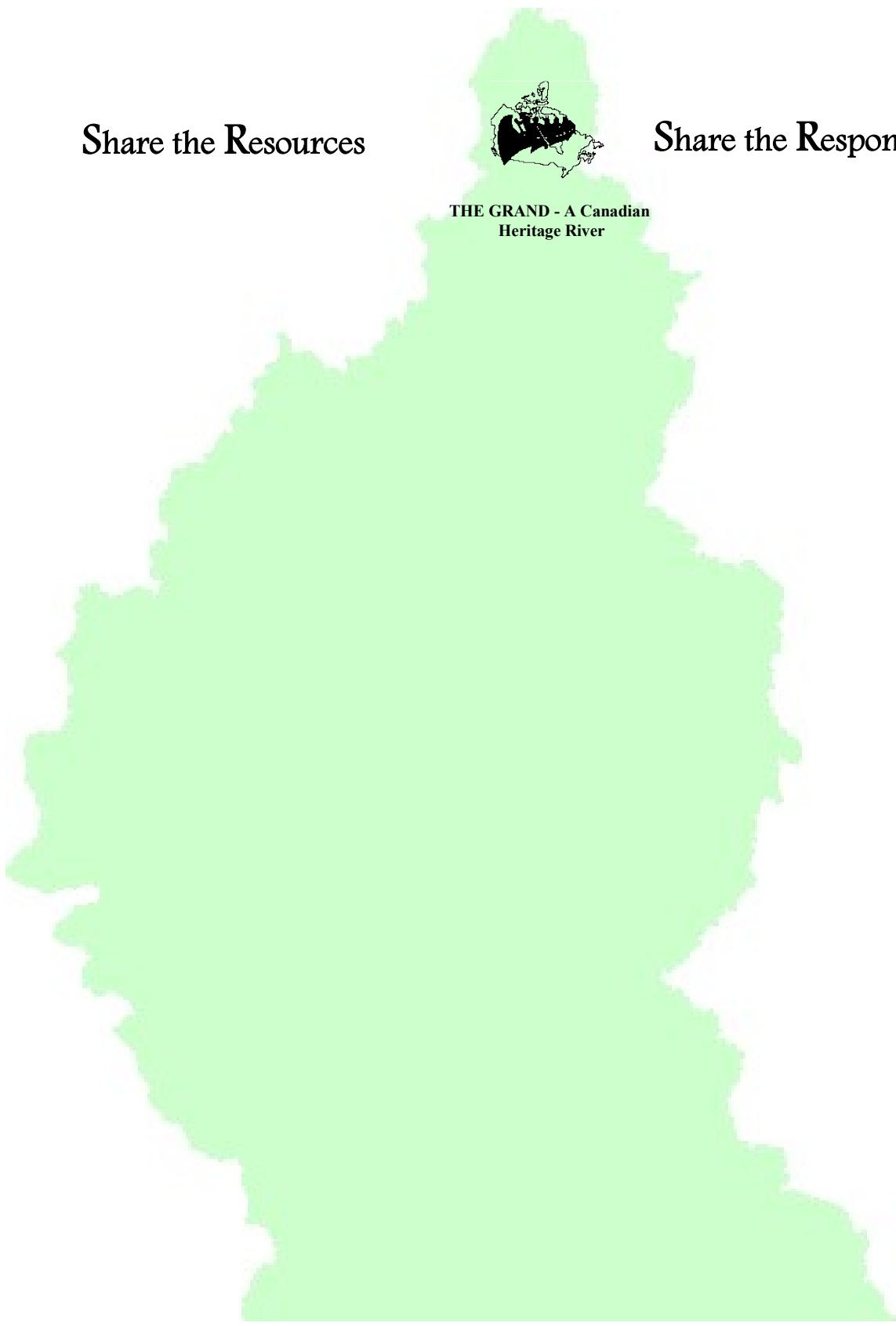
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Share the Resources



Share the Responsibility

**THE GRAND - A Canadian
Heritage River**



Grand River Conservation Authority Human Heritage Policy

1 Introduction

The Grand River provides the common thread that links natural and cultural features and landscapes throughout the watershed. Settlers were attracted to the Grand River valley because the river offered transportation, power and water supply. This rich history is evidenced by the many human heritage features/values that remain intact today.

Human Heritage is defined as:

“tangible and intangible elements of society including artifacts; historical and archaeological structures and sites; architecture; transportation and settlement patterns; works of art; recorded folk tales; festivals; customs; traditions and values; and landscapes – components in the living context, which provide people with a sense of place, continuity and community.” (From A Decade in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System: A Review of The Grand Strategy 1994-2004, p. 4).

The Grand River Conservation Authority’s involvement in human heritage resources within the Grand River watershed is two-fold:

- ◆ as custodian of the Canadian Heritage River designation for the Grand River and its major tributaries, the Speed, Eramosa, Nith and Conestogo Rivers.
- ◆ as a property owner of numerous human heritage features/values.

Canadian Heritage River Designation

In 1987, the Grand River Conservation Authority, on behalf of its member municipalities, spearheaded a participatory process to have the Grand River and its major tributaries declared a Canadian Heritage River. This status was achieved in 1994, based on outstanding river-related human heritage and recreational values of national significance. The management plan tabled with the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board as part of the requirement for designation was called *The Grand Strategy*.

The Grand Strategy embodied a new approach for managing watershed resources based on community involvement, cooperation, consensus and commitment. Conceived as a living, dynamic process, it was founded on beliefs, values and principles that provide a framework for on-going actions that strengthen the knowledge, stewardship and enjoyment of the watershed’s resources.

The Canadian Heritage River designation carries no regulatory or legal restrictions. In order to maintain the heritage river status, a summary report outlining changes to the status of significant human heritage resources to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board must be submitted annually. A full monitoring report is required every ten years. If those human heritage features/values for which the river is designated a Canadian Heritage River are degraded or lost, the river can be de-designated from the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. The loss of one feature/value does not in itself warrant loss of

the heritage river status. It is the cumulative effect of the loss of many which would cause the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to re-evaluate the status of the river.

In 2000, the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board produced “*A Cultural Framework for Canadian Heritage Rivers*”. This framework provides a common vocabulary and approach to the identification of important human heritage features/values associated with existing and potential Canadian Heritage Rivers. The Heritage River Inventory for the Grand River was re-categorized and updated according to this framework in 2003 as part of the preparatory work required for the 10-year review.

The first 10-Year Monitoring Report for the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River was completed in 2004. In addition to providing an assessment of the features/values for which the Grand River was declared a Canadian Heritage River, participants revisited and reaffirmed the vision, values, principles, goals and objectives of *The Grand Strategy*. A revised set of primary actions was developed to provide a relevant framework within which future collective or individual actions can be taken.

Role of the GRCA in the Canadian Heritage River Designation

The Grand River Conservation Authority, in spearheading the Canadian Heritage River designation process, is responsible for reporting to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board through the province of Ontario on the status of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River.

Role of the Grand River Conservation Authority as Property Owner

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) owns and manages approximately 19,000 hectares of land comprising 2.8% of the area located within the Grand River watershed. These lands have been acquired for the following purposes:

- Water Management:* lands for dams/water management reservoirs, erosion control projects and dykes
- Natural Heritage:* lands that are environmentally sensitive (e.g. Provincially Significant Wetlands, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest)
- Forested Lands:* managed forests, Carolinian Canada forests
- Natural Hazards:* lands that are unsafe for development (e.g. steep slopes, floodplains)
- Recreational Lands:* lands that are used for recreation (e.g. conservation areas, rail-trails)

In addition, some of the lands owned by the Grand River Conservation Authority are leased for agricultural and/or residential use. The Conservation Authority also has cottage lots, which were developed in the 1960s at Belwood and Conestogo Lakes.

In total, the Conservation Authority rents over 60 residential properties, 2,000 ha of agricultural land and 735 cottage lots. The Grand River Conservation Authority also owns historic mills including Everton and Apps’ Mill and the mill ruins at Rockwood (Harris Woollen Mills) and Guelph (Goldie Mill). The GRCA also owns 32 water control structures along the Grand River system.

As the custodian of the Canadian Heritage River designation and as a property owner, the Grand River Conservation Authority supports the purpose of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System “*to recognize, protect and manage, in a sustainable manner, Canada’s important rivers and their natural, human & cultural/historical heritage and recreational values*” (from the CHRS, Charter, 1997).

To date, the human heritage features/values associated with Grand River Conservation Authority properties have been dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

2 Policy Intent

This policy provides guidance to assist the Grand River Conservation Authority in fulfilling its role as custodian of the Heritage River designation for the Grand River and its major tributaries and making decisions about human heritage features/values associated with GRCA-owned properties in a more proactive and comprehensive manner.

3 Goals

With respect to the Canadian Heritage River designation, the Grand River Conservation Authority has the following goals:

- To increase awareness of special status of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River.
- To report on the status of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River as required by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board.
- To encourage member municipalities and other owners of human heritage features/values included in the Heritage River Inventory to protect and interpret human heritage features/values.

Through its programs and operations, the Grand River Conservation Authority has the following management goals for human heritage features/values **associated with its properties.**

- To identify, interpret, and monitor human heritage features/values.
- To maintain and protect human heritage features/values, to the extent possible.
- To restore significant human heritage features/values, wherever possible.
- To document and commemorate human heritage features/values where environmental, economic and or social considerations (e.g. public safety) override human heritage benefits.
- To promote stewardship for human heritage features/values on properties offered for sale.

4 GRCA Human Heritage Policies

- 4.1 The GRCA will prominently display the Canadian Heritage River logo on all of its publications and on its website.
- 4.2 The GRCA will promote heritage appreciation and celebration of the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River through its participation in the annual Heritage Day Workshops and other educational and celebratory events.
- 4.3 The GRCA will update annually the Heritage River Inventory according to the Cultural Framework approved by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board as new information becomes available from member municipalities, heritage organizations and heritage studies.
- 4.4 The GRCA will report annually to the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board on the status of human heritage features/values contained in the Heritage River Inventory.
- 4.5 The GRCA will provide administrative and some financial support to the Heritage Working Group of *The Grand Strategy*. (Appendix)
- 4.6 The GRCA will encourage watershed municipalities, through the Authority's plan review or permit review process, to recognize and protect heritage features/values that are contained in the Heritage River Inventory to the extent possible and advise them that the cumulative loss of important features may cause the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to re-evaluate the national status of the Grand River and its major tributaries.
- 4.7 The GRCA will investigate potential funding sources, seek partnerships and develop options for implementing a long-term plan that establishes priorities for protecting, maintaining, restoring, monitoring, and interpreting human heritage features/values on GRCA properties.
- 4.8 Where a property is offered for sale, the GRCA will take appropriate steps to ensure that the subsequent landowners recognize and manage any human heritage features/values associated with the property in a manner which supports the Canadian Heritage River designation, such as a heritage easement, designation under the Ontario Heritage Act or commemorative plaque.
- 4.9 Where it is not economically feasible to maintain a heritage feature/value and where all efforts to secure the needed resources are tried, the GRCA may offer the property for sale in accordance with policy 4.8.
- 4.10 Where, after careful consideration, the environmental and/or social benefits of removing a feature or value or the economic liabilities associated with a feature or value outweigh the benefits of retaining the feature or value, the GRCA will document it, save as many remnants and/or artifacts as possible and donate them to an appropriate institution, if appropriate, and commemorate it with an interpretive plaque or other commemorative feature.

5 Implementation

- 5.1 The GRCA will carry out an inventory of human heritage features/values on Grand River Conservation Authority properties and add any found that are significant

within the context of the Cultural Framework approved by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to the Heritage River Inventory. In order to assess significance, heritage criteria will be developed.

- 5.2 Where properties have not yet been inventoried, the GRCA will undertake a study of human heritage features/ values and assess their significance early in any decision-making process related to land disposition, land use change or demolition in accordance with policy 5.1.
- 5.3 The GRCA will develop a GIS data base to house the Heritage River Inventory, including those human heritage features /values of significance on GRCA properties and will make this inventory accessible to the GRCA staff and general public through the GRCA website.
- 5.4 The GRCA will develop a long-term plan that establishes priorities for protecting, maintaining, restoring, monitoring, and interpreting human heritage features/values on GRCA properties.
- 5.5 The GRCA will review this Policy at five-year intervals, except where changes in provincial legislation, regulation or guidelines require otherwise.



Goldie Mill - Guelph



Apps' Mill - Brant



Harris Woolen Mill -
Rockwood



Hortop's
(Everton's Mill)

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Appendix

Heritage Working Group

As a direct result of *The Grand Strategy*, the Heritage Working Group was formed in 1995 to act as a catalyst for increasing community involvement and commitment in greater appreciation, protection, enhancement, promotion, coordination, celebration and management of the human heritage resources in the Grand River watershed. The membership of the Heritage Working Group is drawn from all areas of the Grand River Watershed and includes representation from government agencies, universities, heritage groups, national historic sites, museums, Grand River Conservation Authority and others.

During the past 10 years the Heritage Working Group has achieved a number of notable results. Each year since 1998, it has hosted a Heritage Day Workshop and Celebration in partnership with various watershed municipalities and heritage organizations and the Grand River Conservation Authority. In 2004, it guided a watershed inventory of heritage bridges and a 10-year review for the Grand River as a Canadian Heritage River.

The Heritage Working Group's mission is:

*To increase the involvement and commitment of government/non-government agencies, businesses/corporations, property owners, schools and universities, media and citizens resulting for greater appreciation, protection, enhancement, promotion, coordination, celebration and management of the **human heritage** resources in the Grand River watershed and thereby maintaining the river's national designation under the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. We achieve this annually by:*

- *facilitating opportunities for networking, educating, partnering, and working collaboratively;*
- *encouraging other like-minded organizations to initiate and develop projects;*
- *disseminating information to our target audiences;*
- *monitoring the status of heritage values and features;*
- *evaluating the effectiveness of achieving our strategic goals*

Roles of the Heritage Working Group:

- acts as an advisory group and resource to the Grand River Conservation Authority in support of the Canadian Heritage River designation.
- members come together to share information with one another and with communities throughout the watershed.
- builds community capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of Grand River heritage resources/values.
- promotes the Grand as a Canadian Heritage River and disseminates information to key stakeholders that have responsibility for conserving, managing and promoting

the human heritage of the Grand River Watershed (including engagement of First Nations).

- helps monitor the status of significant heritage values and features.

Year	Workshop Theme	Location	Sponsors	Attendance
1998	What Works: How to Build Your Community's Ability to Plan, Manage and Make Decisions about Heritage	Grand River Conservation Authority	GRCA	135
1999	Help Build Your Community's Capacity to Plan and Manage Heritage Resources	Sanderson Centre, Brantford	City of Brantford/GRCA	125
2000	River Towns: Building on our Grand Heritage	Cambridge Arts Theatre	City of Cambridge/GRCA	115
2001	Heritage Makes \$ense: Discover Why	Walper Terrace Hotel, Kitchener	City of Kitchener/Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation/GRCA	175
2002	Passport to the Grand South	Kinsmen Centre, Cayuga	Haldimand County/Ministry of Culture/GRCA	300
2003	Grand Renewals: Adaptive Reuse and the Cultural Landscape	Guelph Youth Music Centre	City of Guelph/GRCA	180
2004	Grand Legacies: Boom, Bust and Beyond	Paris Fairgrounds	County of Brant/City of Brantford/GRCA	225
2005	Bridging Time	Fergus Legion	Township of Centre Wellington/GRCA	235