



Photo Credit: Kirk Hillsley

# **Baxter Creek Watershed Alliance: Strategic Plan 2024 – 2027 (2025 Update)**





Photo Credit: Kirk Hillsley

## Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that we work and are located on the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples who have inhabited these lands from time immemorial. As settlers, we're grateful for the opportunity to live and work on these lands and we thank all the generations of Indigenous people who were the original caretakers and stewards of these lands for thousands of years. In particular, we acknowledge our presence on the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg adjacent to Haudenosaunee Territory and in the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations collectively known as the Williams Treaties First Nations, and the lands of the Rice Lake Purchase (Treaty #20).

These lands of the Treaty #20 area are the traditional territories of the Hiawatha, Curve Lake, Alderville, and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nations. We recognize and deeply appreciate their original, historic, and modern connection to this land. We also recognize the contributions of all Indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole. We offer gratitude to First Nations for their care of, and teachings about, the earth and our relationship to it. Baxter Creek Watershed Alliance honors these teachings through our actions and respect for the land we aim to protect.



Photo Credits: Kirk Hillsley

## About BCWA

BCWA is an organization founded through diversity and united by passion, aimed at protecting and enhancing the health of the watershed to preserve its integrity for future generations of human and wildlife. Members of the alliance work to protect and conserve the natural and cultural heritage areas in the watershed. The members of the alliance include the Old Millbrook Jail Lands Association.



Photo Credit: Millbrook Times

## Our Vision

People living and working in the Cavan-Monaghan and the Baxter Creek area, caring for a clean and healthy watershed.

## Our Mission

We are dedicated to conserving and enhancing the local watershed environment for future generations for humans and wildlife.





## Our Values

### **Natural and Cultural Heritage**

Protecting the natural and cultural heritage to conserve the community.

### **Sustainable Development**

Watershed research and planning remain a top priority to ensure development impacts are minimal and introduced in a sustainable fashion.

### **Conservation Lands**

Identify opportunities to conserve lands as public open green spaces that support environmental preservation & stewardship opportunities.

### **Environmental Education**

A key component in maintaining a healthy watershed is the transfer of inter-generational knowledge within our local community. Sharing and working with the community on environmental and ecological issues associated with public and natural resources will help shape future stewards in our area.

### **Ecosystem Restoration**

Restoring lost functions and services in the degraded ecosystems to maintain biodiversity across the watershed.

### **Agricultural Stewardship**

Agricultural lands are key conservation lands that provide critical ecosystem services in our watersheds. Over 50% of the Baxter Creek watershed consists of agricultural and rural land use, compared to less than 10% community and infrastructure.

### **Partnerships and Collaboration**

Engage with stakeholders and First Nations to collaborate on strategic goals, parallel initiatives and local watershed initiatives.



Photo Credit: AllTrails

# Strategic Goals

## Support Environmental Informed Planning

- Support environmental and fiscally sound decisions associated with both urban and rural planning within the Township to minimize degradation of the surrounding natural environment.
- Promote a science-based approach to protect the natural lands and water in the Baxter Creek Watershed.

## Promote Environmental Awareness & Education in the Community

- Establish environmental protection and education programs to benefit the community.
- Partnering with other conservation organizations with similar objectives and purposes to link projects in the Baxter Creek Watershed with those in neighboring regions.
- Partnering with other organizations for the purchase and protection of lands for low impact public use.
- Encourage private landowners in the Baxter Creek Watershed to protect and preserve significant natural resources on their properties.
- Advocating for the preservation of significant natural environmental features within the ecosystem including, but not limited to birds, fish and other animals.

## Source Water Protection

- Protect water at its source, while broadly protecting all aspects of groundwater and surface water systems against human activities on the landscape.
- Stream rehabilitation through the creation of a riparian buffer zone to reduce runoff, encourage stream bank stability and mitigate sedimentation.
- Restoring lost functions and services in degraded ecosystems to maintain biodiversity across the watershed.



Photo Credit: AllTrails

## Objectives

### **Agricultural Stewardship**

- Promote and encourage the implementation of Agricultural Stewardship Guides in partnership with KLT within the agricultural community of the Watershed and Township.
- Engage with the organization ALUS Peterborough, to promote and obtain financial/resource incentives. This would lead to assisting local farmers to implement best agricultural management practices to reduce the impacts of agricultural activities on the surface and within groundwater systems.

### **Community Mapping**

- Encourage additional volunteer citizen scientists to help collect biodiversity data in particular to future represent wetland habitat to monitor breeding frogs and toads.
- Increase environmental monitoring and mapping programs to analyze how well restoration efforts are progressing in restoring lost biodiversity.

### **Indigenous Engagement**

- Restoring engagement and guidance of First Nations communities is essential for the enhancement of the health of the Baxter Creek Watershed. We recognize the deep connection to Mother Earth that First Nation peoples have and we value their knowledge towards the land.

### **Conservation Lands**

- Track, register for, and contribute to an appropriate environmentally oriented future/disposition of the former Millbrook Correctional Centre lands through the provincial surplus process
- Explore stewardship options for lands conservation across the watershed.





Photo Credit: AllTrails

### Community Outreach for Environmental Awareness & Education

- Host an annual public watershed forum in the community which includes presentations from local experts and displays of BCWA information and partner information.
- Update the BCWA website regularly with quarterly newsletters and section updates as needed.
- Implement an awareness blog on the website and have the information shared across social media.
- Promote and encourage local landowners with large natural properties to consider qualifying their lands for the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program where feasible.
- Encourage local landowners of large natural properties to consider Conservation Easements or land donations to local land trusts where properties add value to the natural heritage system.
- Provide awareness that under the *Municipal Act* Section 135: a local municipality may prohibit or regulate the destruction or injuring of trees; and that Section 270 (1) requires that: A municipality shall adopt and maintain policies with respect to (7) The manner in which the municipality will protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the municipality
- Follow (and respond) to the Master Servicing Study (MSS) for Water and Wastewater under the framework of Master Plan
- Partner with the MCHS in identifying cultural heritage features associated with the trees and ensure their protection through municipal by-law and also support the development of a Heritage Conservation District in Millbrook.
- Involve Trent University students in a pollinator garden on a local farm.



Photo Credits: Millbrook Times







Photo Credit: AllTrails

## Watershed & Land Research

- Continue to promote Trent University student placements through the School of Environment and Community-based Research Centre.
- Meet with faculty and Director of Trent University School of the Environment to consider postgraduate master or doctorate research projects for the potential of a collaborative NSERC grant funding initiative.
- Continue partnering with Trout Unlimited Millbrook Chapter to further monitor the local streams for temperature, dissolved oxygen, and other environmental attributes.
- Determine the amount of protected land within the municipality and watershed. This will allow a better understanding of the extent to which it meets the federal government/international goal of conserving 30 percent of Canada's land and water by 2030..
- Determine Millbrook's most significant trees using a lidar-derived canopy height model and tree inventory. As well, use the watershed watch quick capture mobile app and web map which has a tree inventory feature for spatially cataloging trees along with their photos.



Photo Credit: Kirk Hillsley



Photo Credit: George Rabb





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# Our Partners



KAWARTHA LAND TRUST

### **Kawartha Land Trust (KLT)**

KLT is collaborating with BCWA as they share similar goals and objectives regarding natural heritage in the region.



### **Save Our Trees (PHorests 4R PHuture)**

Save Our Trees has an agreement with the KLT and BCWA to protect and preserve ecological heritage sites and has written a letter of support towards BCWA.



### **For Our Grandchildren (4RG)**

4RG supports BCWA's vision of protecting ecological significant areas, as well as the broader work in conservation issues.



### **esri Canada**

Esri is a nonprofit program that has provided BCWA with sustained, low-cost access to geographic information system software (GIS) and other resources.



Millbrook CHAPTER

### **Trout Unlimited Millbrook Chapter**

Trout Unlimited Millbrook supports the BCWA's initiative to protect the former Millbrook Jail lands which is the source of the cold water tributaries of Baxter Creek.



### **Camp Kawartha**

Camp Kawartha supports the vision BCWA has initiated under the Old Millbrook Jail Lands Association and the green space development objectives of the initial land use planning process.





## **Baxter Creek Watershed Alliance**

**Located in:**  
Millbrook, Ontario

**Our Website:**  
[www.baxtercreekwatershed.org](http://www.baxtercreekwatershed.org)

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