



# Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority

***PROTECT***

***IMPROVE***

***PROMOTE***

***HEALTHY  
WATERSHEDS***



## *Strategic Plan 2017-2021*

# Strategic Plan



## Introduction

We are delighted to introduce the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority **Strategic Plan 2017-2021**. Through our planning process, we have created the first formal strategic plan undertaken by the SSMRCA.

Initiated by the SSMRCA General Manager, a formal strategic planning process was started in 2016.

Working with an external facilitator, our employees and Board members collaborated to share ideas, envision the future and identify key strategies towards moving the SSMRCA beyond day-to-day operations.

## Our Key Strategies for 2017-2021



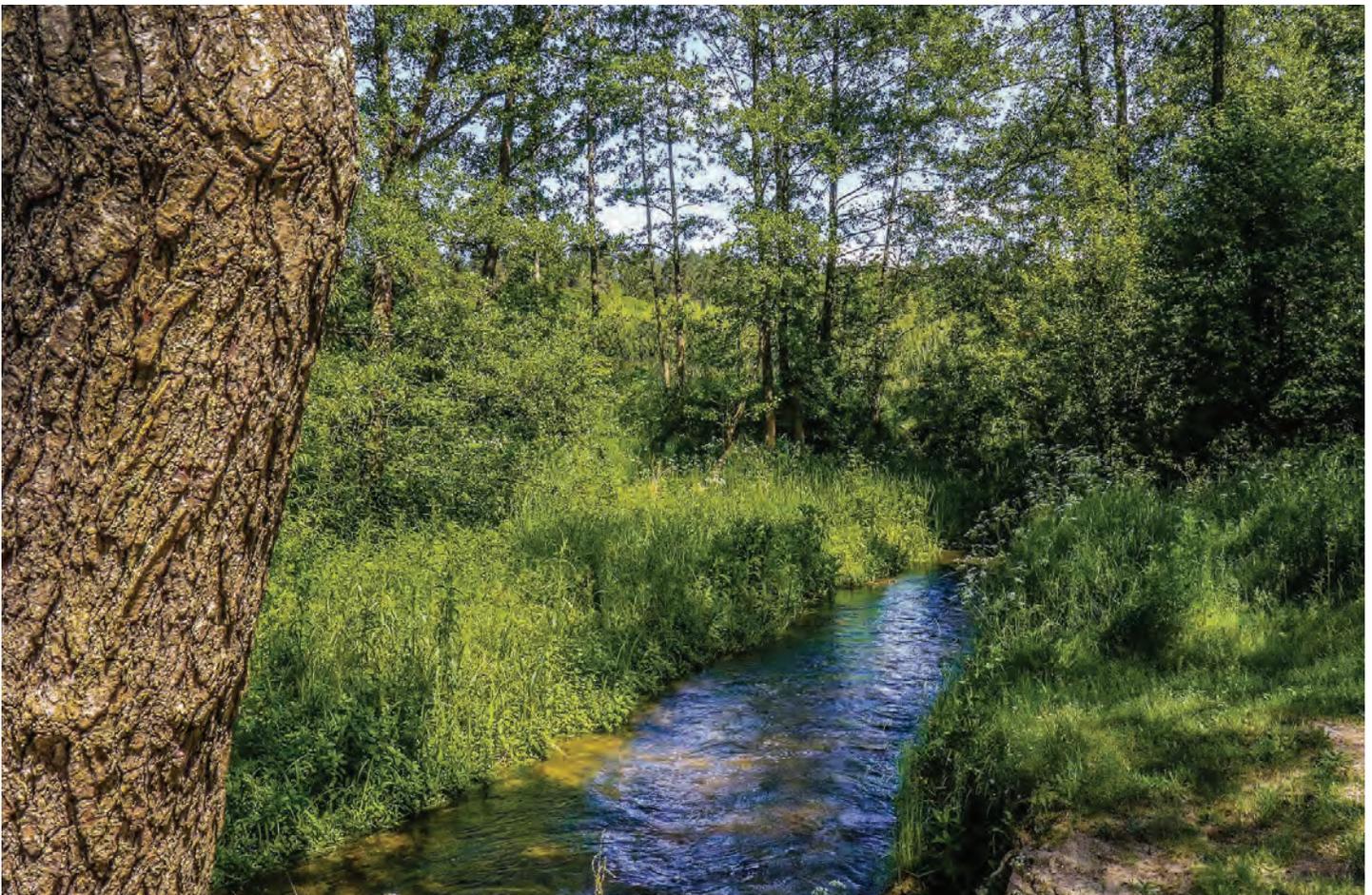
**Protect  
Improve  
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## **Message from the General Manager**

On behalf of the staff of the Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority, I am pleased to present the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan for the SSMRCA. The plan was developed with the intention of bringing about a better understanding of our roles and strengthening our position within the communities we serve. The citizens of Sault Ste. Marie and Prince Township are the primary benefactors of Conservation Authority programs. We strive to deliver quality programs, provide natural recreation areas, develop partnerships and provide excellent customer service.



# Overview



## **Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority**

The SSMRCA is one of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities. Located in Northeastern Ontario, the SSMRCA provides cost-effective watershed management based on over 50 years of local experience.

- Our watershed encompasses a 775 square kilometre area, which includes the St. Marys River and a number of smaller watersheds draining the northern shore of Lake Superior.
- The SSMRCA owns and manages over 5,000 acres of diverse ecosystems including forests, wetlands and shorelines.
- Some of the properties contain significant natural features while others hold portions of our five flood control channels and the Fort Creek Dam and Reservoir.
- These water control structures help protect against the loss of life and property damage due to flooding. Sault Ste. Marie and Prince Township are home to approximately 74,000 people.
- We administer Ontario Regulation 176/06 to regulate development and activities in specific areas to reduce the threat of loss of life and property damage from natural hazards such as erosion and pollution and to minimize flooding.

# Lead Priorities



## Our Mandate

Conservation Authorities, created in 1946 by an Act of the Provincial Legislature, are mandated to ensure the conservation, restoration and responsible management of Ontario's water, land and natural habitats through programs that balance human, environmental and economic needs.



**Environment**



## Our Vision

Healthy watershed existing in a balance between the natural environment and human needs.

## Our Mission

To protect, improve and promote local watershed through the delivery of resource management services and programs in cooperation with community partners.



# Drivers of Change



## Increasing Capabilities of Human Resources

Opportunities for the establishment and delivery of new programs will require a new resource model which would include more staff for the following areas: conservation area maintenance and programs; science; flood control and maintenance. Cross training for staff for sustainable tasks and a focus on additional training to increase capabilities to transition to the future state.



## Using Innovative Tools and Supports

Movement to the technology sphere of live data feed/display is necessary to respond to extreme weather conditions and their impact on the ecosystem. The need to provide policies and guidelines to the public through online technology to provide essential information during the planning process is required. An asset management plan for equipment is essential. Embracing facility and technology advancements to reflect the eco-friendly philosophy of Conservation Authorities provincially will require a multi-year plan and commitment.



## Clarifying Our Role Within the Community

Public and municipal awareness of what we do and how we do it is essential to implement our SSMRCA Strategic Plan 2017-2021. A renewed focus on awareness is required at the local community and industry level as well as the provincial and federal levels. Improving our image must be a priority at the beginning of our action plans.

# Guiding Principles



The following guiding principles articulate how we will succeed.

- Respect for the public at all times
- Positivity, respect and compassion for ideas and people
- Leverage a team approach to achieving our goals
- Provide consistency in all customer interactions
- Develop an action plan and establish periodic reporting on progress
- Adopt an attitude of continuous improvement

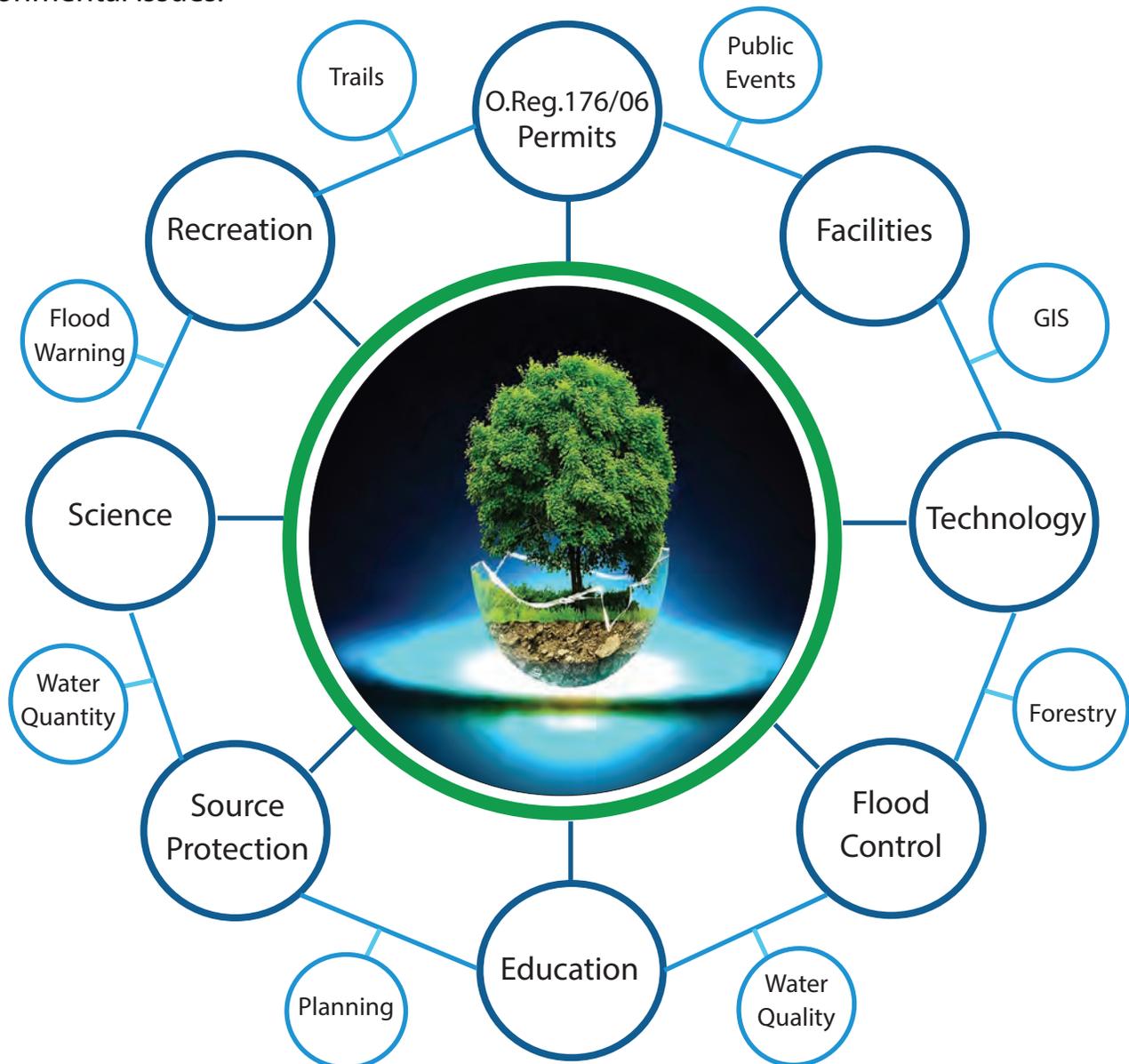


# Key Strategies



## 1. Expanding the Variety of SSMRCA Programs

The SSMRCA mandate and programs need to be highlighted to increase awareness with the public, land use partners and political decision makers. Emphasis on Conservation Authority facilities, area attractions, science and technology and programs available to the public are foundational to success. Educating youth is essential for equipping them to address future environmental issues.



# Key Strategies



## 2. Enhance Existing and Develop Enduring Partnerships

Critical to the implementation of SSMRCA *Strategic Plan 2017-2021* is to leverage learning from the past to help communicate the vision of the future. To implement the plan, support is required from the local community, municipal, provincial, and federal agencies. Leveraging existing positive relationships and developing a relationship management approach to the new concept of champions/sponsors by targeted local stakeholders is as much about having partnership support as it is receiving funding. The SSMRCA wish to continue a cooperative relationship with local First Nations communities.



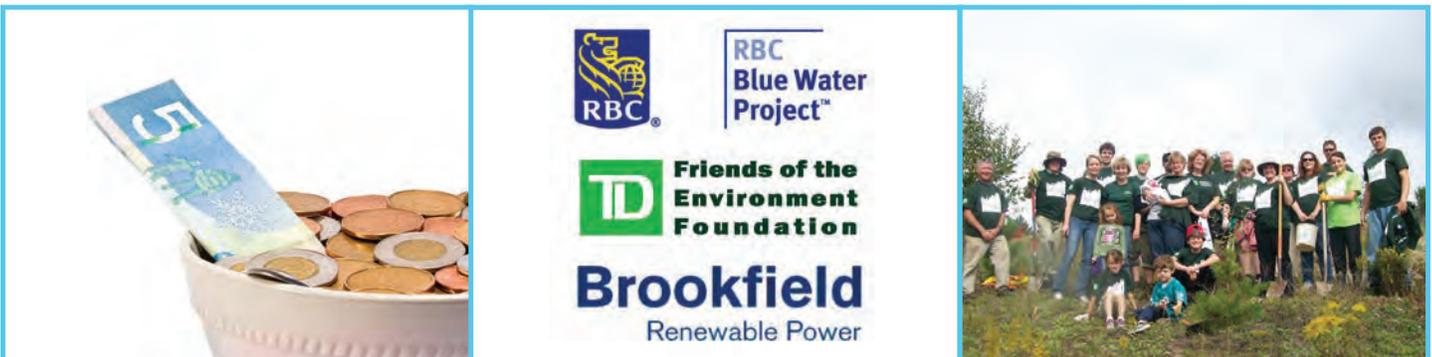
# Key Strategies



## 3. Developing Sustainable Revenue Sources

Revenue sources from municipal and government agencies are limited and subject to fluctuations on an annual basis. Additional revenue will be required to implement basic goals such as: new programs; equipment maintenance and new purchases to maintain safety of employees; purchase and implementation of new technology; development of communication plans; and relationship management of champions and sponsors. Time invested in developing sustainable revenue sources will be essential to achieving the goals.

Stretching our thinking to new partnerships from private industry will require significant planning, communication and execution to achieve long-term revenue sources.



**Ideas + Revenue = Growth**



# Key Strategies



## 4. Creating a Communication Strategy

A communication strategy will be beneficial for the SSMRCA to explore new and existing community groups (audiences), identify needs, align appropriate communication related activities and determine how best to deliver them. The basic discipline of aligning our messages to our community groups will strengthen the process of identifying our stakeholders and exploring potential champions/sponsors. The opportunity to focus on communication to each audience will help to identify some of the gaps and additional opportunities.

