Reforming the Grand River Conservation Authority

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We had a great deal of difficulty with the GRCA last summer when we filed two complaints.  One was about Creekside Church who drained a significant wetland habitat on a weekend without a proper permit from the GRCA.  The other was about the redirection of polluted ditch water to one of Jane Schneider's best frog breeding ponds off Wilmot Line (home to Blanding's turtle) by municipal road crews from the Township of Wilmot.

I was quite surprised with the lack of public involvement after the complaints were made.  In one case, I felt they were trying to persuade me not to file a formal complaint; and in another, they insisted the activity had stopped when it hadn't.  They only responded when they were supplied with video proof.

They were dismissive.  We were told that they would not be following up with us, that our presence was not needed when they met with the agencies to sort things out on site; and when we asked what direction was given to the offending parties, they said they couldn't provide that information to us even though we were the ones who filed the complaint.

Another concern is the penalties, which are certainly not a deterrent.  They are also limited with what they can do if the offences are not reported to them within a short 6-month window.  All require change.

**Benefits:** Will get GREN working all across the Grand River watershed and will get us known and involved with people beyond Waterloo Region

**Possible Actions:**

1. Gather examples from others in the watershed on their experiences with GRCA and suggestions for improvement
2. GREN regularly monitor GRCA decision-making
3. GREN make recommendations on changes and work to get those changes implemented
4. Others??