**Water Issues**

Protecting water, both groundwater and surface water, is a major priority for GREN and for a number of its participating groups and individuals. Waterloo Region is the largest urban community in Canada dependent on groundwater for most of its municipal supply, and many smaller communities in the watershed draw their supply from the Grand River. Efforts to conserve and protect these essential water sources must be ongoing.

As one of the fastest-growing areas in Canada, the Grand River watershed experiences increasing pressures that threaten both the quantity and quality of our water. Among these threats are

* Urban sprawl, which paves over the moraines that infiltrate and store groundwater
* Increasing numbers of operations to mine aggregate, which can pollute both groundwater and river water
* Large water-takings from aquifers by private interests, particularly bottled water companies, which deplete local water supplies
* Contamination from chemical spills and historic buried waste
* Excessive stormwater run-off carrying urban and agricultural pollutants into the river
* Road salt infiltrating the aquifers

Most concerning is the revival of plans to build a pipeline from Lake Erie to replace the local groundwater supply. Inevitably, abandoning local groundwater for municipal supply would mean little effort spent to protect it. With more aggressive water conservation, groundwater can supply our needs into the foreseeable future, even as the population increases.

**Volunteer groups involved in protecting water in the Grand River watershed include:**

* **Nith Valley Ecoboosters** (Wilmot and Wellesley Townships)

Website: nvecoboosters.com
E-mail: nvecoboosters@gmail.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Nith-Valley-EcoBoosters-106180851258463/>

* **Wellington Water Watchers** (Guelph) <https://www.wellingtonwaterwatchers.ca>
* **APT Environment** (Elmira) shbryant@uwaterloo.ca
* **Hold the Line** (Waterloo Region) <https://www.holdthelinewr.org>
* **Citizens for Safe Water** (Wilmot Township) <https://safeh2o.ca>
* **Concerned Citizens of Brant** (CCOB) http:/ccob.ca
* **Sustainable Brant (**Ella Haley) ehaley1@gmail.com