



WATERSHED
Report Card

**Gunn
Creek**



Raisin Region
Conservation Authority

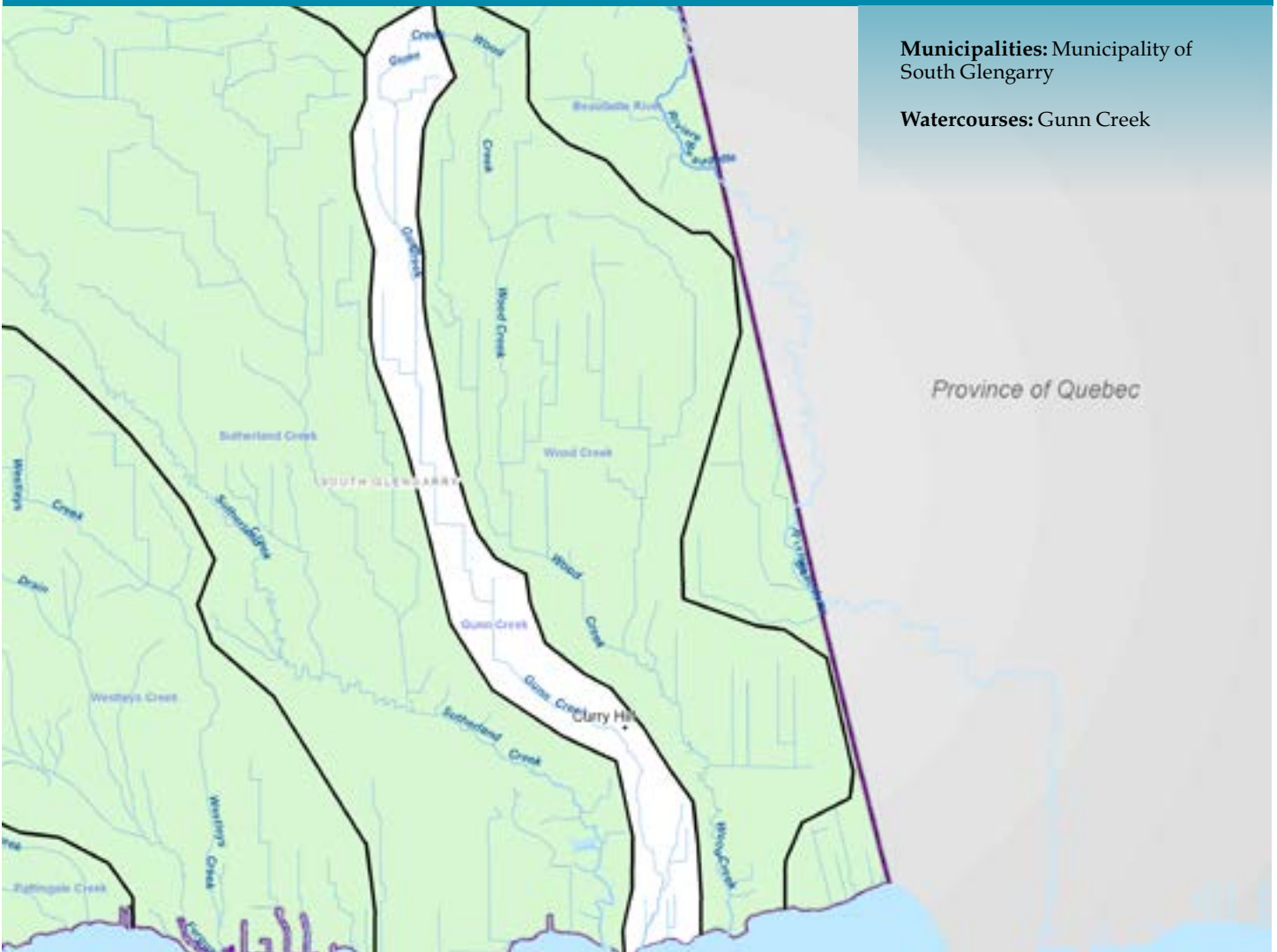


Grades

- F** Forest Conditions
- F** Wetland Conditions
- D** Surface Water Quality

This Watershed Report Card outlines the environmental information for the Gunn Creek watershed as of 2017. The information provides a description of forest, wetland and water parameters and ideas for local action to assist agency staff, municipalities and interested parties working for the protection of local forest, wetland and water resources.

Gunn Creek Watershed



Municipalities: Municipality of South Glengarry

Watercourses: Gunn Creek

F Forest Conditions

Overall, forest conditions in the Gunn Creek watershed rank an F grade. The amount of forest cover (7%) is too low to be ecologically sustainable. The Remedial Action Plan delisting criteria is 30 percent forest cover in the Area of Concern tributary watershed to maintain ecosystem function. There is zero percent forest interior present meaning the existing woodlots are not large and wide enough to support sensitive species that need to live in large protective forests.

The Remedial Action Plan delisting criteria is five percent forest interior habitat in the Area of Concern tributary watershed. Forest interior habitat consists of forest cover in which the forest extends 200 metres from forest edge and has a minimum core area size of 40 hectares.

Indicators	Gunn Creek Results		Raisin Region Watershed Average		Indicator Description
Forest Cover	7%	F	36%	B	Forest cover is the percentage of the watershed that is forested. It is believed there should be at least 25 to 30% natural cover to sustain native plants and animals.
Forest Interior	0%	F	4%	D	Forest interior refers to the protected area inside a woodlot that some species require to survive. The outer 200 metre perimeter is "edge" habitat and prone to stresses from predators, alien species and the elements.

Local Actions Needed for Improvement:

- Protection of all woodlands and Locally Significant Wetlands at the municipal planning level is a very important and effective method of preserving local forest cover.
- Forest interior can be increased by "bulking up" woodlots to make them larger and rounder by planting native trees and shrubs around existing woodlots or allowing the edges to naturalize on their own (e.g., retire land near woodlot edges).
- Connections can be made between woodlots and other habitat types by planting hedgerows or windbreaks along fields, waterways and roads.
- To improve the health of individual woodlots, owners should prepare and follow Woodlot Management Plans.



F Wetland Conditions

Overall, wetland conditions in the Gunn Creek watershed rank an F grade. The amount of wetland cover (1%) is not high enough to suggest ecological sustainability. The Remedial Action Plan delisting criteria highlights that sub-watersheds should contain seven to 10 percent wetland cover.

Wetlands are an important source of habitat for fish and wildlife species. Wetlands serve as flood control areas by holding water and reducing flow. Wetlands act as holding areas for the local water table and play a very important role in water quality improvement.

Indicators	Gunn Creek Results		Raisin Region Watershed Average		Indicator Description
Wetland Cover	1%	F	8%	C	Wetland cover is the percentage of the watershed that is wetland (swamp and/or marsh). It is believed there should be at least 10% natural wetland cover to sustain biodiversity and wetland functioning.

Local Actions Needed for Improvement:

- Protection of all Provincially and Locally Significant Wetlands at the municipal planning level is a very important and effective method of preserving wetland cover.
- Wetland biodiversity can be increased by planting native trees and shrubs around existing wetlands or allowing the edges to naturalize on their own (e.g., retire land near wetland edges). This will provide essential habitat for many wetland species.
- Connections can be made between wetlands and other habitat types, such as forests, by planting hedgerows or windbreaks along fields, waterways and roads to support the movement of native species.
- To improve the health of individual wetlands (swamp), owners should prepare and follow Woodlot Management Plans and fence out any livestock.
- To create or improve the size of individual wetlands, owners should contact the Conservation Authority for assistance in designing a wetland project.



D- Surface Water Quality

The Gunn Creek sub-watershed ranks a D- with respect to overall water quality based on benthic, phosphorus and bacteria scores.

The phosphorus loading from the creek is high and is contributing to excessive macrophyte problems in Bainsville Bay.

A Hilsenhoff Index score of higher than 5.00 indicates that organic pollution is likely and water quality deteriorates.

Indicators	Gunn Creek Results		Raisin Region Watershed Average		Indicator Description	
Benthic Score (H.I)	7.08	F	6.30	F	5.00	Benthic organisms are the aquatic invertebrates that live in stream sediments and are a good indicator of water quality and stream health. The Hilsenhoff Index assigns a weighting for each taxon of invertebrate based on its tolerance of organic pollution. The sum of the weighted scores gives an indication of the degree of organic pollution in the stream.
Phosphorus (mg/L)	0.105	C	0.134	D	0.06	Phosphorus is found in such products as soaps, detergents, fertilizers and pesticides and contributes to excess algae and low oxygen in streams and lakes.
Bacteria (per 100 ml)	83	C	180	F	100	<i>E. Coli</i> bacteria are found in human and animal waste and their presence in water indicates fecal contamination. <i>E. Coli</i> bacteria are a strong indicator for the potential to have other disease-causing organisms in the water

Local Actions Needed for Improvement:

- Plant buffers (grassed or treed) along creeks, rivers and open drains to filter runoff and provide shade.
- Implement protection of identified groundwater infiltration zones and conduct groundwater research and monitoring.
- Target soil erosion measures to areas of high erodibility.
- Encourage landowners to repair or replace faulty septic systems.
- Encourage agricultural Best Management Practices in the areas of manure storage and spreading, soil conservation practices, fertilizer and pesticide application, milkhouse washwater disposal and cattle access restriction.
- Promote the completion of Environmental Farm Plans and Nutrient Management Plans
- Protection of Provincially and locally significant wetlands in Official Plan



Area	The total area of Gunn Creek sub-watershed is 1 039 ha (0.7% of Raisin Region Watershed).
Land Use	The major land uses within Gunn Creek are intensive agriculture including cash cropping and livestock production.
Soil Type	It has a third order stream system totaling 22 km (< 20 m width) located exclusively on private land.
Stream Flow	It has a third order stream system totaling 22 km (< 20 m width) located exclusively on private land.
Fishery Resources	Warm water forage and sport-fish community of 13 species, none of which are species of concern.
Woodlot Size	Warm water forage and sport-fish community of 13 species, none of which are species of concern.
Riparian Forest	4.5% (1 km) of the 22 km of streams on private land have riparian cover.
Rare Species	Unknown
Significant Natural Sites	Provincially Significant Wetlands – Bainsville Bay Marsh Locally Significant Wetlands - None Significant Natural Areas - None Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest – None



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May 2017