

# Bayfield Headwaters

## Watershed Report Card 2023

A watershed is an area of land that drains rain and snow into creeks, streams and rivers.

The watershed in which you live provides your link to the natural world. Watersheds connect our actions and accumulate to degrade or improve conditions.

### GRADING

**A** Excellent

**B** Good

**C** Fair

**D** Poor

**F** Very Poor



### FOREST CONDITIONS

GRADE

**D**



### SURFACE WATER QUALITY

GRADE

**C**



### Thumbs Up!

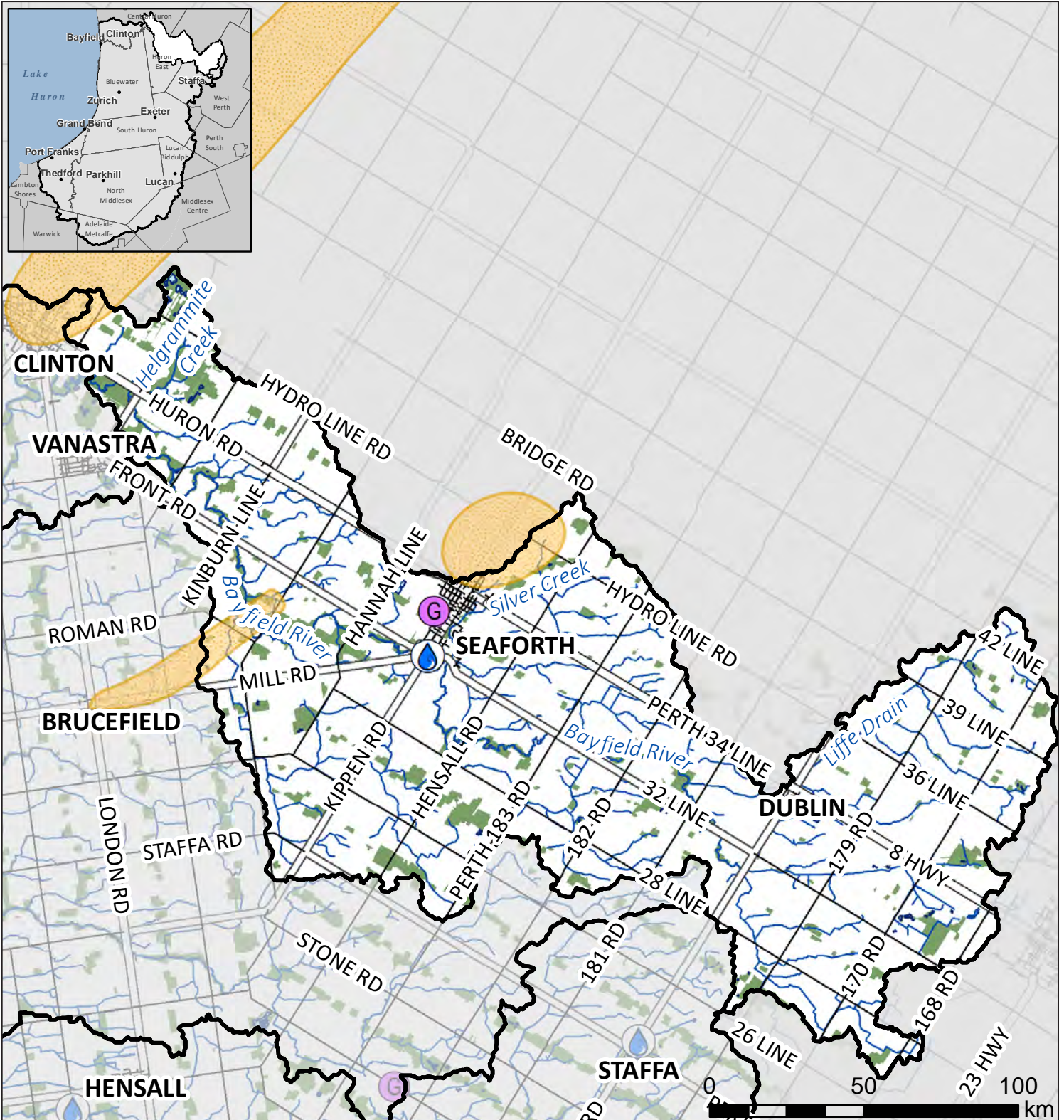
Cover crops, such as the plant shown above, help to improve surface water quality. **Agricultural producers** have planted at least 1,300 acres of cover crops over the last five years. The actual number of acres planted is likely more. We only track the number of acres we administer through grant programs.

Cover crops help to reduce the loss of topsoil and nutrients and build soil health. It is especially important to plant cover crops in headwater areas to prevent downstream runoff and erosion.

*Report cards give residents information to protect and enhance their watershed.*



# BAYFIELD HEADWATERS WATERSHED



- Natural feature
 Surface water monitoring station
 Wellhead protection area
- Water body
 Groundwater monitoring station
 Watershed boundary

Municipalities: West Perth, Huron East, Central Huron

Area: 203 sq. km

This map has been compiled from various sources and is for information purposes only. The ABCA takes no responsibility for, nor guarantees, the accuracy of all the information contained in the map. Copyright King's Printer, 2023.

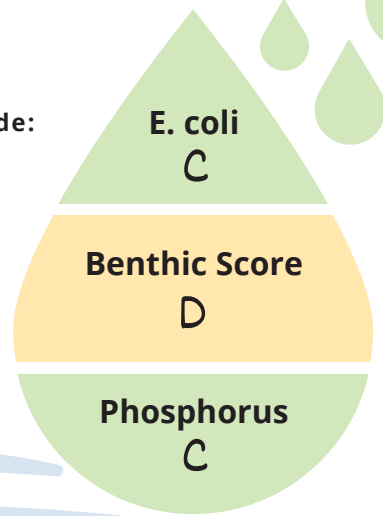
 **SURFACE WATER**

**C**

The complete report card, including an explanation of calculations and historic data, can be found at [abca.ca/watershedreportcard](http://abca.ca/watershedreportcard).

Grade:

- A
- B
- C
- D
- F



**E. coli was 259 cfu/100 mL.** *E. coli* are bacteria that may indicate contaminated water. An A is 30 cfu/100 mL or less. The recreational guideline is 200 cfu/100 mL or less.

**Benthic Score was 5.84.** Benthic invertebrates are small animals that live in stream sediments. This score summarizes their numbers and types in a sample to rate stream health from healthy (1) to poor (10).

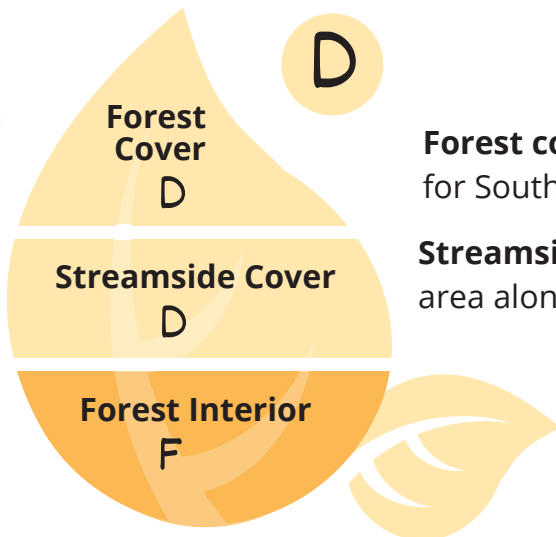
**Total phosphorus was 0.050 mg/L.** High phosphorus concentrations can lead to excess algae and low oxygen in streams. An A grade is 0.020 mg/L or less.

 **FOREST CONDITIONS**

**D**

Grade:

- A
- B
- C
- D
- F



**Forest cover was 7.6%.** The Environment Canada guideline for Southern Ontario is 30%. An A grade is 35% or greater.

**Streamside cover was 17.2%.** This is the percentage of 30-m area along streams that is forested. An A is 57.5% or greater.

**Forest interior was 0.7%.** This is the percentage of forest at least 100 m from the forest edge. Interior forest is required as breeding habitat for some bird species. An A grade is 11.5% or greater.

 **GROUNDWATER**

**Chloride: Less than A**  
**Nitrate: A**

Groundwater from wells is the municipal drinking water source in Brucefield, Clinton, Seaforth, Varna, and Zurich. Your drinking water quality may be different from monitoring wells.



**OVERWINTER VEGETATION**

**on Agricultural Land**

**25 - 30%** of farmland had wheat, forages, or hay as winter groundcover. At least 30% overwinter cover is expected if in a corn-soy-wheat rotation. Overwinter cover helps prevent soil erosion. Agriculture covers 83% of the land in this watershed.



**WETLANDS**

**F**

**1%** of the area in this watershed is wetland. Wetlands improve water quality, reduce flood risk, and provide habitat. An A grade is 11.5% or greater.

## How can you help?

### You can:

- Use conservation tillage, crop rotation, and grassed waterways to protect your soil.

### Your community can:

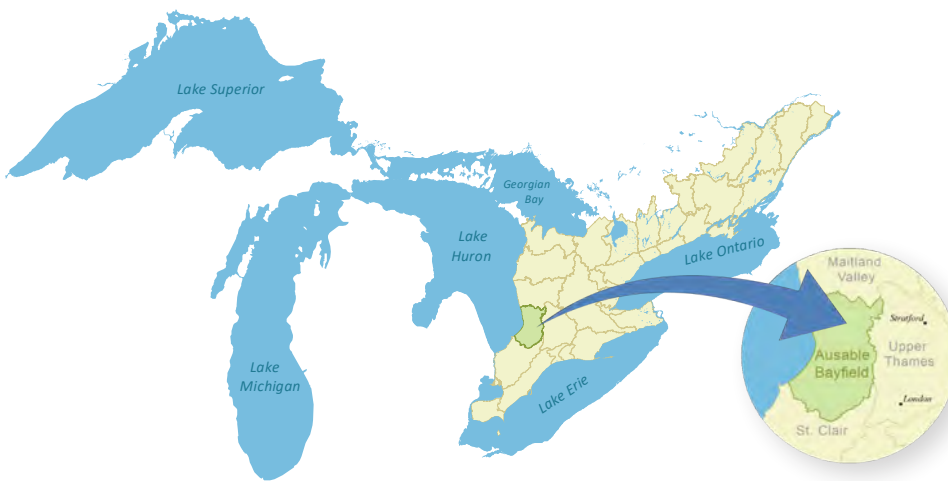
- Organize a community creek cleanup.

### Local agencies can:

- Encourage financial incentive programs, such as county clean water projects.

### TOP ACTION:

To improve forest conditions and water quality, protect existing woodlots and plant streamside buffers.



### Links to the Great Lakes

No matter where you live in the watershed, you are linked to the Great Lakes.

We rely on the lake as a source of drinking water, economic activity, and recreation.

Your personal actions, whether you live in a town or in the country, can make a difference for Lake Huron.

Visit [lakehuroncommunityaction.ca](http://lakehuroncommunityaction.ca)

### Ausable Bayfield Conservation

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