

Upper Ausable

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



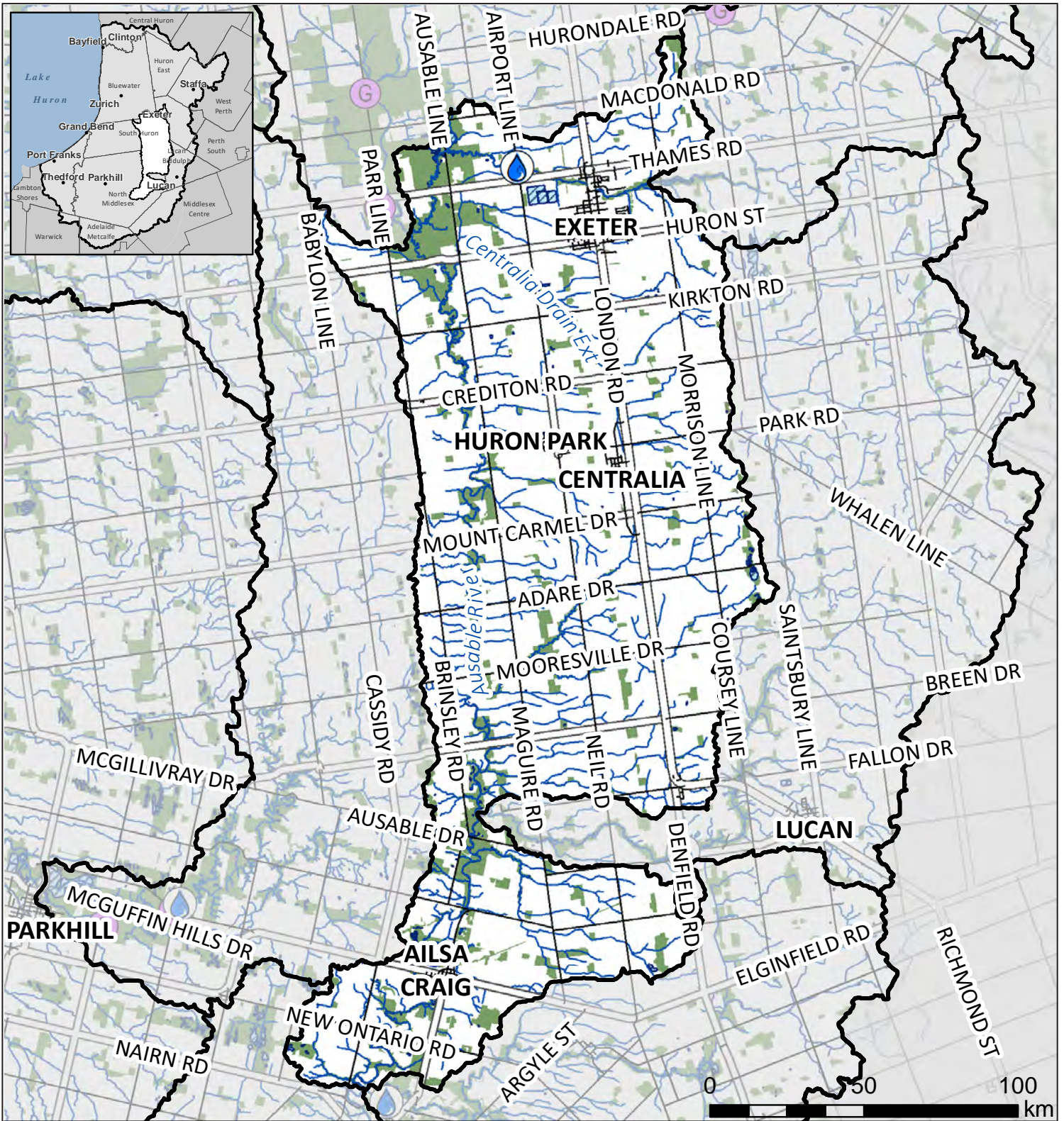
Thumbs Up!

To improve forest conditions and surface water quality, a **local landowner** has planted more than 6,000 native trees to retire flood plain areas, and erosion-prone hillsides adjacent to the Ausable River (photo above). These types of projects not only protect soil, but also the many species-at-risk fish, mussels and turtles that live in the Ausable River.

Are there opportunities to plant native species on your property?

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

UPPER AUSABLE WATERSHED



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

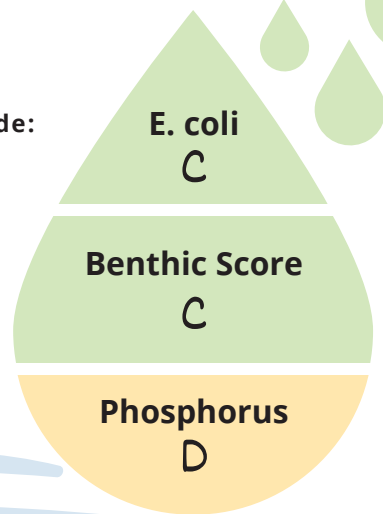
Municipalities: Bluewater, South Huron, Lucan Biddulph, North Middlesex Area: 240 sq. km

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**

Grade:

- A
- B
- C
- D
- F



The complete report card, including an explanation of calculations and historic data, can be found at abca.ca/watershedreportcard.

E. coli was 210 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.

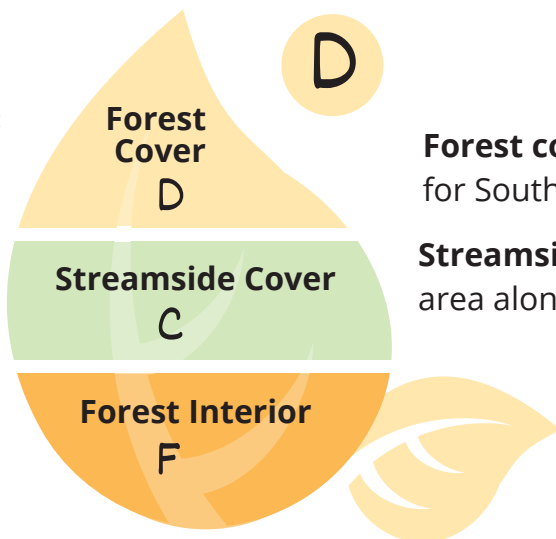
Benthic Score was 5.67. Benthic invertebrates are small animals that live in stream sediments. This score summarizes their numbers and types in a sample to rate stream health from healthy (1) to poor (10).

Total phosphorus was 0.096 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**

Grade:

- A
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- F



Forest cover was 10.7%. The Environment Canada guideline for Southern Ontario is 30%. An A grade is 35% or greater.

Streamside cover was 31.0%. This is the percentage of 30-m area along streams that is forested. An A is 57.5% or greater.

Forest interior was 2.2%. 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: 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**

19 - 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 76% of the land in this watershed.

 **WETLANDS** F

2.5% 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:

- Cover the soil, rotate crops, and reduce tillage to prevent field erosion.

Your community can:

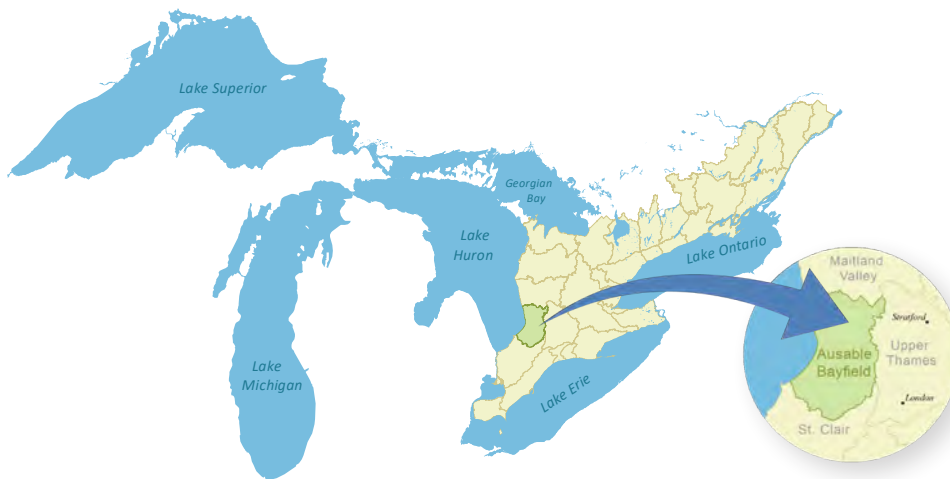
- Construct erosion control projects and plant vegetation where possible.

Local agencies can:

- Continue to work with the community to enhance the local trail network.

TOP ACTION:

To improve water quality, plant cover crops, reduce tillage, rotate crops and reduce farm, lawn and garden fertilizers.



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

Ausable Bayfield Conservation

71108 Morrison Line, RR 3 Exeter, ON N0M 1S5

E-mail: info@abca.ca | Website: abca.ca

Phone: 519-235-2610 | Fax: 519-235-1963 | Toll-free: 1-888-286-2610

