

Old Ausable Channel Watershed Report Card 2018



Grades:

- A – Excellent
- B – Good
- C – Fair
- D – Poor
- F – Very Poor

Forest Conditions



Grade:

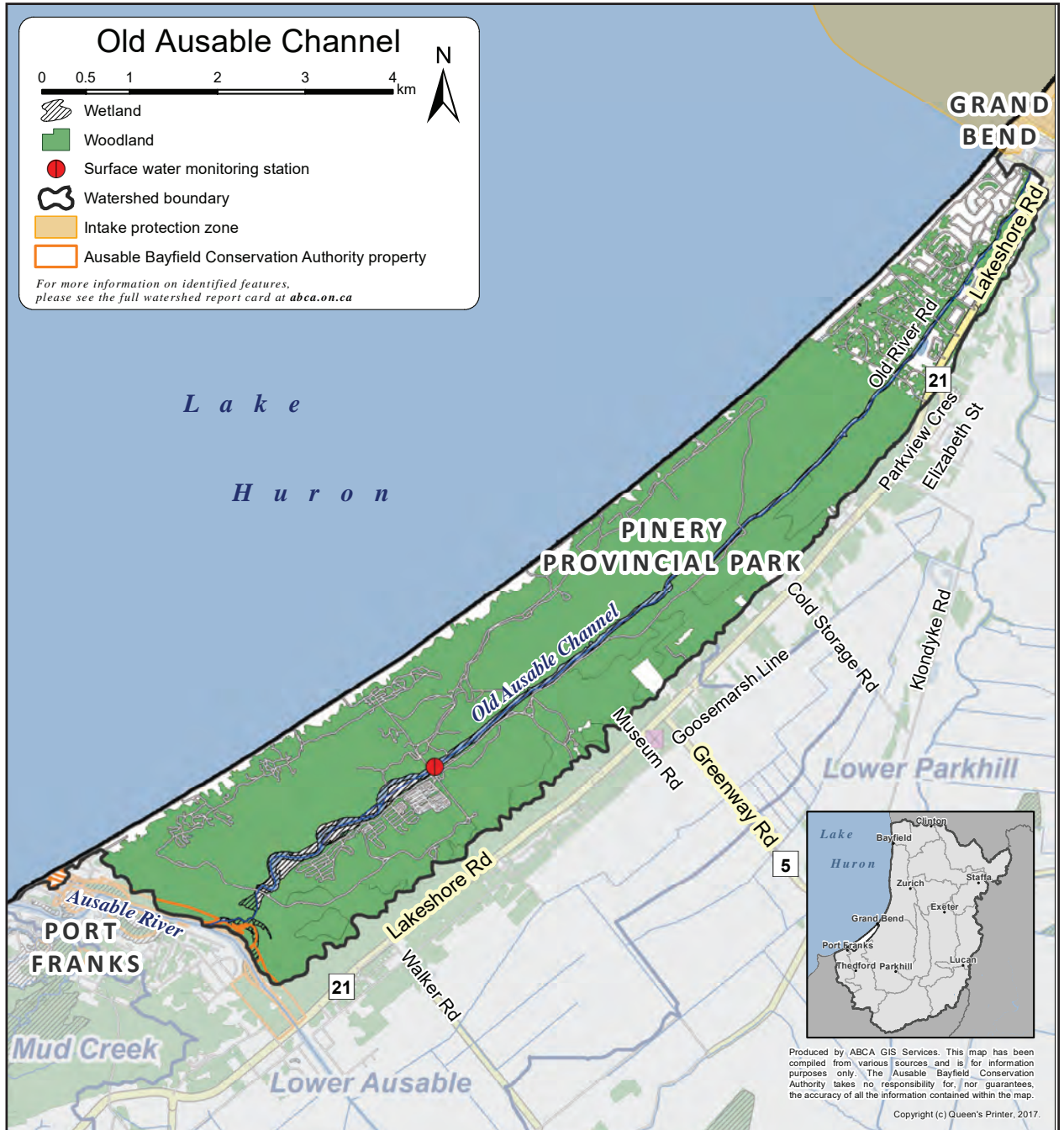
A

Surface Water Quality



Grade:

A



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

Report card standards were developed for consistent reporting across Ontario.

Top action needed to enhance this watershed:

- Develop guidance for ongoing water level and dissolved oxygen conditions in the Old Ausable Channel.

Visit back page for more actions.



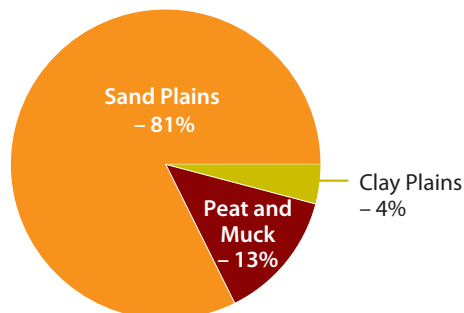
Watershed Features



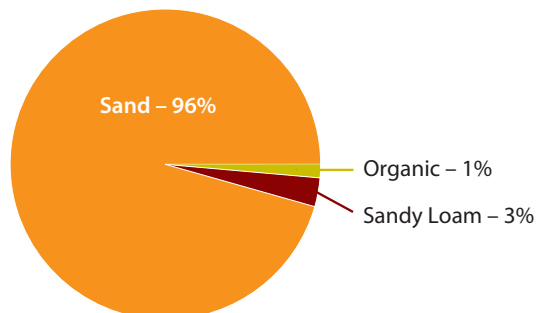
Area: 24 km²

Municipalities: Lambton Shores

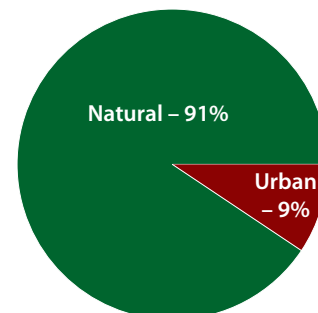
Geology, soil type, and land use help explain surface water and groundwater quality and forest conditions.*



Geology (Chapman and Putnam 1984)



Soils (County Soils Maps 1951-1991)



Land Use (OMAFRA 2015)

Fishable

Fish:

- There are warmwater fish including Largemouth Bass, Yellow Perch, Sunfish and Northern Pike.
- This is important habitat for fish species at risk.

Species at Risk:

- One mammal; three birds; six reptiles; three fishes; two insects; and six plants.*

Did you know?

The Common Five-lined Skink is Ontario's only lizard. If a skink is caught by a predator, the skink's tail can break off and move, which hopefully distracts the predator and allows the skink to escape.



Swimmable at Local Lake Huron Beaches



- To reduce the risk of illness, refrain from swimming for 48 hours after heavy rainfall, especially when you can't see your feet in waist-deep water.
- Water quality at public beaches is monitored from June to Labour Day.
- Find results from your local public health unit and theswimguide.org

Drinkable

Municipal Drinking Water Sources

- Lake Huron (surface water) is the source of raw water for municipal drinking water for many local towns.
- Groundwater from wells is the municipal drinking water source in Brucefield, Clinton, Seaforth, Zurich, and Varna.
- Learn about your municipal well or intake at this link: sourcewaterinfo.on.ca

Private Wells

- Test your well water in spring and autumn.
- Visit ogwa.ca/Well-Wise-Testing for well protection tips.

Groundwater Conditions



- A provincial monitoring well does not exist in this watershed, but groundwater may be similar to wells near Arkona and Pinery Provincial Park. Nitrate concentrations are better than the drinking water standard at these wells, but chloride concentrations are not as good, and approach the guideline at the well near Arkona.
- Your well water quality may differ from that of provincial monitoring wells.



* Go to abca.ca for the complete Watershed Report Card to learn more.

Watershed Grades



Forest Conditions



Indicator	Description	Result		2017 Grade	
		2012	2017	Old Ausable Channel	Entire ABCA
Forest cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest cover is a percentage of a watershed that is forested. An A grade is forest covering more than 35% of a watershed. 	82.2%	82.1%	A	D (14.2%)
Forest interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forest interior is the percentage of a watershed with forest cover that is at least 100 metres from the forest's edge. Some birds need this area to nest and breed. An A grade is forest interior covering more than 11.5%. 	43.8%	43.8%	A	D (3.3%)
Streamside cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamside cover is the percentage of the 30-metre area on both sides of open streams that is forested. An A grade is forest covering more than 57.5% of this streamside area. 	76.9%	76.9%	A	C (32.6%)



Overwinter Vegetative Cover on Agricultural Lands

- Overwinter vegetative cover on agricultural lands is not applicable to this watershed due to the absence of agricultural land use. For a description of overwinter cover please consult the full report of the *Ausable Bayfield Watershed Report Card 2018* at abca.ca.



Surface Water Quality



Indicator	Description	Result		2017 Grade	
		2012	2017	Old Ausable Channel	Entire ABCA
Total phosphorus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total phosphorus is a nutrient. It enhances plant growth. It contributes to excess algae and low oxygen in streams. An A grade is a 75th-percentile* total phosphorus concentration of less than 0.020 mg/L. 	0.020 mg/L	0.016 mg/L	A	D (0.073)
E. coli (Escherichia coli)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>E. coli</i> are bacteria found in human and animal waste. Their presence indicates water may contain other disease-causing organisms. An A grade is a geometric-mean* <i>E. coli</i> concentration of no more than 30 colony forming units (cfu) per 100 mL. 	8 cfu/100 mL	9 cfu/100 mL	A	C (104)
Benthic invertebrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benthic invertebrates are small animals, without backbones, that live in stream sediments. Family Biotic Index (FBI) summarizes the numbers and types of these animals in a sediment sample. Values, from 1 (healthy) to 10 (degraded), reflect stream health. An A grade is an average FBI value of no more than 4.25. 	NA	NA	NA	C (5.59)

* The complete *Ausable Bayfield Watershed Report Card* at abca.ca has information on 2007 grades, definitions (such as 75th percentile and geometric mean), methods, and results.

Next Steps

How can you help?

You can:

- Plant Carolinian species in your yard. Read the *Living with Nature* guidebook, at abca.ca, for suggested species.

Your community can:

- Plant native vegetation along the Old Ausable Channel.

Local agencies can:

- Continue to support municipal policies that protect natural areas.

Take action!

We can help you to develop an individual action plan for your property. Interested in monitoring your watershed? Call us to find out how.



Thumbs up!

The 5000 Trees Project, now referred to as the Lakeshore Eco-Network, has initiated tree planting as well as hosting a Forest Festival in 2017 in Grand Bend. Fisheries and Oceans Canada continues to support aquatic species-at-risk monitoring.

Grants

Funding may be available to help you plant trees, control erosion, and improve water quality. Call us to find out more.



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 action can make a difference for Lake Huron.

Visit lakehuroncommunityaction.ca



Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA), 71108 Morrison Line, RR 3 Exeter, ON • N0M 1S5 • Phone: 519-235-2610 • Toll-free: 1-888-286-2610
Facsimile: 519-235-1963 • E-mail: info@abca.ca • Website: abca.ca

Visit abca.ca for the complete *Watershed Report Card* for all Ausable Bayfield watersheds.