

The Value of Groundwater in the Credit River Watershed

Ecological Goods & Services Fact Sheet

Fast Facts

- Close to 90,000 individuals (12% of the watershed population) get their water from groundwater in the Credit River Watershed.¹
- Groundwater usage in communities in the Credit Valley Watershed is 14.7 million m³ per year. That's equivalent to more than 5,600 Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- It would cost over \$100 million each year to service this use with water from Lake Ontario.
- It pays to protect our groundwater resources from threats like overconsumption, urban development and pollution.

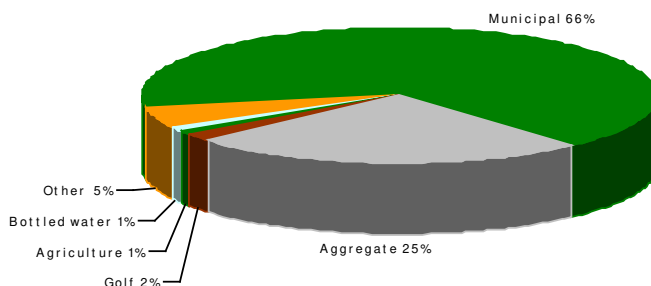


Who uses groundwater?

Residents and businesses in Orangeville, Georgetown, Erin Village, Acton, Hillsburgh, Alton, Caledon Village and other communities in the upper watershed get their water from groundwater sources.

As a result, they depend on the health of forests and wetlands that continue to filter (i.e. purify) and replenish their groundwater supplies.

Municipal customers in the watershed, like residents and businesses, are the major users of groundwater, consuming 66% of the total water taken per year. Aggregate uses consume 25% of the total, with lesser amounts consumed by golf courses (2%), agriculture (1%), and bottled water (1%).



If these communities' groundwater sources were compromised (as a result of overconsumption, urban development, excessive pollution, etc.), the existing demand might be met by piping water from Lake Ontario to settlement areas. The cost to meet only the existing demand would be \$6.84 per m³ / or \$100.5 million per year (2007 CAD). (This value estimate is based on the replacement cost of pumping water from Lake Ontario. Replacement cost is one way of estimating the economic value of an ecological service such as clean water.)

These estimates do not include the treating of wastewater from private septic systems, or the contribution of groundwater to the cold water fishery, which supports important community recreational assets.

Under the Clean Water Act, CVC is working with a number of partners to develop a Source Protection Plan to protect sources of municipal drinking water in the watershed.

For more information about the economic value provided by the natural capital of the Credit River Watershed, download the report, "Natural Credit - Estimating the Value of Natural Capital in the Credit River Watershed" at www.creditvalleyca.ca/bullein/resources.htm