



# Welcome to the Grand River Exceptional Waters

This guide has been printed with the financial assistance of : Brant Waterways Foundation and Enterprise Brant

## The Grand, A Canadian Heritage River

The Grand River was designated a Canadian Heritage River in 1994. The Grand River and its major tributaries, the Nith, Conestogo, Eramosa and Speed Rivers are included in the designation.

This status was achieved because the Grand River watershed tells the story of the history and development of central Canada in a way that is still visible and meaningful.

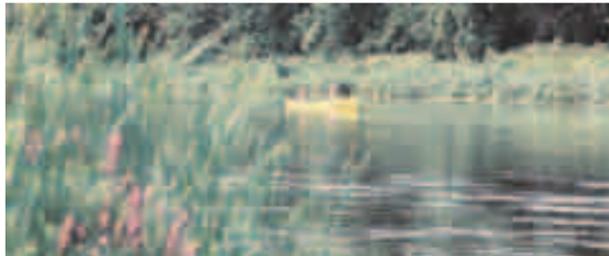
Its rich river culture has been preserved in the landscapes, buildings, bridges, mills and settlement patterns that still exist today. The excellence and diversity of recreation opportunities associated with the Grand River also contribute to the designation. Water quality has improved significantly over the past 60 years. Watershed residents enjoy hiking, paddling and fishing the Grand.

A spirit of cooperation among municipalities, agencies, Grand River Conservation Authority, community groups and others is widespread. The Grand River continues to be a symbol of what rivers can be in urban Canada.



## Exceptional Waters

Welcome to the Grand River Exceptional Waters Reach. The section between Penman's Dam in Paris and the Cockshutt Bridge in Brantford has been identified as an Exceptional Water. This designation applies to rivers or lakes of outstanding quality that are managed as a community resource providing quality outdoors experiences while promoting environmental sustainability.



## Points of Interest

Natural and historical features abound along the river. This pamphlet can only explore them in a limited fashion. We hope we will stimulate your curiosity to further explore your special interest in the river and its corridor. Tourist bureaus in the area have more detailed information, as do various web sites. Some highlights to look for include:

- ♦ Apps Mills Nature Centre
- ♦ Bell Heritage Homestead
- ♦ Brantford Downtown
- ♦ Brant Park Conservation Area
- ♦ Gordon Graves Memorial Pathway
- ♦ Grand Valley Trail
- ♦ Mohawk Chapel
- ♦ Kanata Village
- ♦ Paris Downtown
- ♦ SC Johnson Trail
- ♦ Trans Canada Trail
- ♦ Waterworks Park
- ♦ Gypsum Mines Remnants



## River Geology

In the Exceptional Waters reach the Grand travels through a major moraine corridor, throughout the Paris to Brantford area known as the Paris and Galt Moraines. The moraine extends from Long Point to the Halton Region. The moraines are a major source of groundwater. You will see evidence as you paddle the river of the many small flows of water entering the main river. Some you will hear more than see. The tributaries entering through this section tend to be coldwater sources and contribute the desirable habitat for coldwater fish species such as trout. The tributaries also add significant amounts of water to the river's flow. The area today is heavily mined for aggregate. The development of the Paris area in particular was a result of limestone/gypsum deposits, hence the name Paris from Plaster of Paris. Evidence of old mine shafts and access roads may be seen between Paris and the 403 bridge.



## Wildlife

There is a wide, diverse natural wildlife population. Careful observation will provide viewing benefits as paddlers float the river.

## Mammals

A wide variety of mammals call the banks of the Grand River home due to its quality habitat. White tail deer are resident all along the river corridor, sometimes moving into residential areas. It is not unusual to see deer along the river, particularly in the early morning or evening. Red fox, coyotes, raccoons, rabbits, weasel, mink and beaver can also be seen under the right circumstances. Paddling away from shore when possible will provide more viewing opportunities, as the animals are not as likely to be surprised and dart away as paddlers approach.



## Birds

The banks of the Grand are a bird watcher's paradise. In addition to the many smaller species we now have populations of larger birds. The great blue heron is common; snowy egrets have been spotted, as have lesser bittern. Kingfishers frequent the banks. In the air and perched high in the trees look for the turkey vulture, often seen riding the air currents along with various hawks. Lucky visitors can spot bald eagles and osprey. If you see nesting sites stay well away to give the birds the space they need to develop and increase their population.

Many of these bird species are fish eaters. Their growing presence is an indicator the fish population in the area is improving. They are indicators of a healthy river corridor and contribute to the designation as an Exceptional Water.

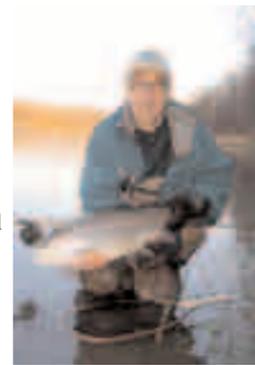
## Fish

Fish populations are responding well to water quality and habitat improvements that have been ongoing over the past several decades in the Grand River. You can expect to find good populations of a variety of gamefish and other species in the Exceptional Waters Area of the Grand River.

Smallmouth bass, rainbow trout, walleye, northern pike, catfish and carp will all challenge anglers fishing in these waters.

Coldwater tributaries and groundwater provide habitat for brook, brown and rainbow trout to spawn and thrive.

For fishing regulations consult the MNR's Web site at [www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca). You might also want to purchase a copy of *Fishing Grand River Country* available from the GRCA and various bookstores and outfitters.



## Fish Management Plan

The Grand River has a diverse and productive fishery. To protect and improve this resource a community-based Fisheries Management Plan was initiated in 1995. The planning process included fisheries managers and representatives from various angler and interested groups from throughout the watershed. An implementation committee was formed and they are working towards completing "Best Bets" identified in the Fisheries Management Plan.

The Plan includes 42 "Best Bets", some of which are evident in the Exceptional Waters area. Special angling regulations have been introduced to protect smallmouth bass and migratory rainbow trout in a portion of the Exceptional Waters reach from 100 metres downstream of the Dundas Street bridge in Paris to the pedestrian /service bridge on the upper side of the Brant Conservation Area. Anglers must use barbless hooks, no live bait and practice catch and release for all species in this area. For details on the regulations check [www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca).

An extended season for rainbow trout has been implemented in the Exceptional Waters reach. Rainbow trout season is now open until December 31 instead of September 30. This allows additional angling opportunities in this beautiful stretch of water.



## Exceptional Waters Partner Links

- Brantford Community Foundation [www.brantfordcommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.brantfordcommunityfoundation.ca)
- Bell City Anglers
- Brant Field Naturalists
- Brant Resource Stewardship Network [www.ontariostewardship.org](http://www.ontariostewardship.org)
- Brant Rod & Gun Club
- Brant Waterways Foundation: [www.brantwaterways.ca](http://www.brantwaterways.ca)
- Brantford Steelheaders
- City of Brantford: [www.brantford.ca](http://www.brantford.ca)
- Conservation Ontario: [www.conservation-ontario.on.ca](http://www.conservation-ontario.on.ca)
- County of Brant: [www.county.brant.on.ca](http://www.county.brant.on.ca)
- Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada
- Enterprise Brant [www.enterprisebrant.com](http://www.enterprisebrant.com)
- Grand Experiences [www.grand-experiences.com](http://www.grand-experiences.com)
- Grand River Conservation Authority [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)
- Grand River Conservation Foundation [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca)
- Grand River Fisheries Management Plan
- Grand River Country: [www.grandrivercountry.com](http://www.grandrivercountry.com)
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources: [www.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca)
- Ontario Steelheaders: [www.ontariosteelheaders.ca](http://www.ontariosteelheaders.ca)
- Ontario Trillium Foundation [www.trilliumfoundation.org](http://www.trilliumfoundation.org)
- S.C. Johnson a Family Company [www.scjohnson.com](http://www.scjohnson.com)
- Six Nations Ecocentre [www.sixnations.ca](http://www.sixnations.ca)
- Trout Unlimited Canada: [www.tucanada.org](http://www.tucanada.org)
- Tourism Brantford: [www.visitbrantford.ca](http://www.visitbrantford.ca)



### Access Points

To assist in providing paddling access to the Exceptional Waters section, three launch points have been developed. See map for reference. Bean Park, in Paris on the west side of the river on Race St., Brant Conservation Area in West Brantford off Jennings Rd. and Cockshutt Bridge in Eagle Place at the end of Erie Ave.

### Paddling Times

Bean Park to Brant Park (2.5 - 3 hours paddling)  
Brant Park to Cockshutt Bridge (1.5 - 2 hours paddling)

The access points have excellent parking and are designed to cover convenient lengths of the river for tripping or fishing from watercraft. The Exceptional Waters reach is not suitable for motorized craft because of shallow depths. There are local outfitters that can provide canoe rental and shuttle services.

For those accessing the banks of the river by foot, many of the trail parking areas are short walking distances from the water and are on or near public lands.



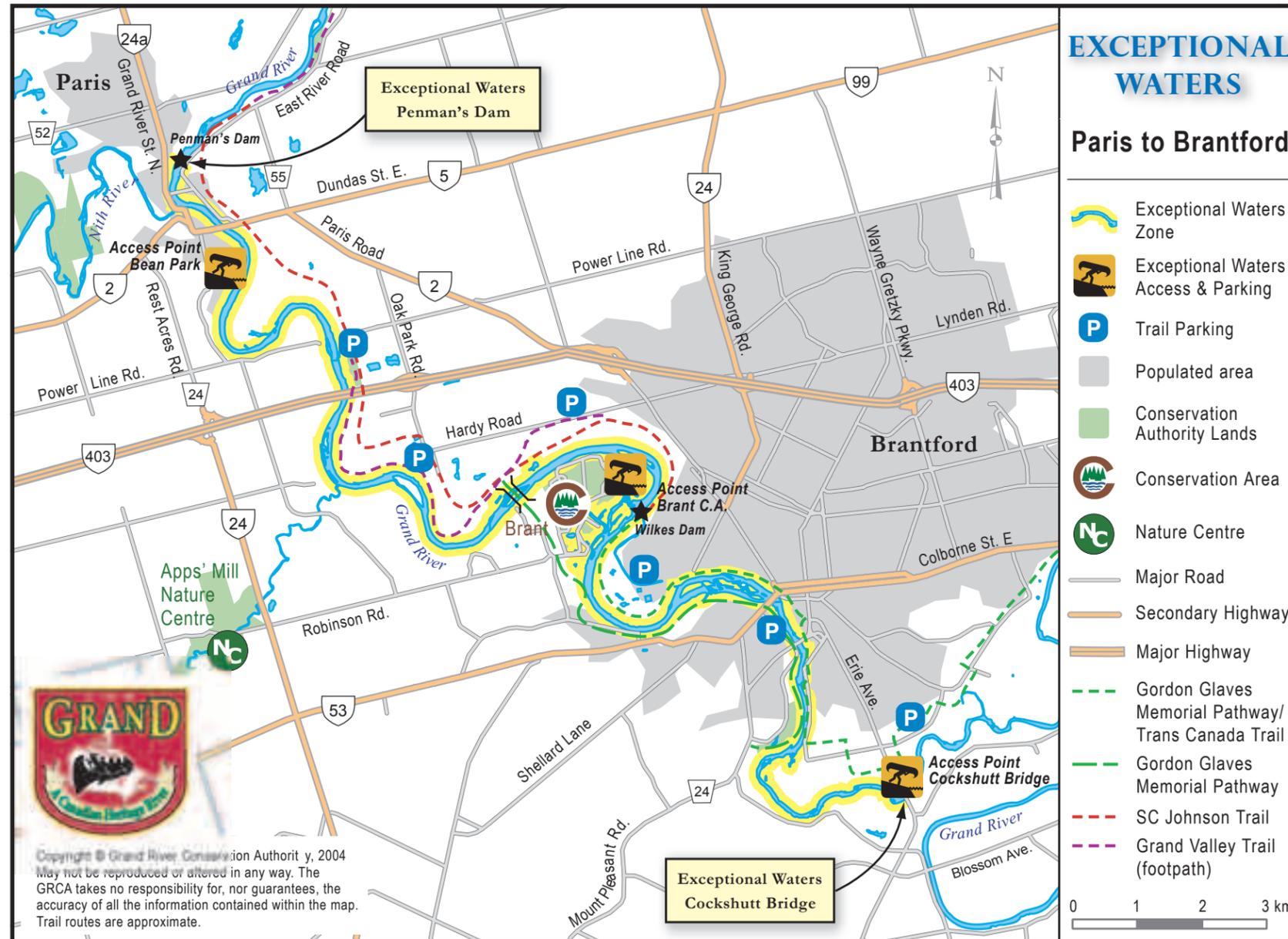
### Trails on Adjacent Shoreline

A number of trails follow the Grand River. In the Exceptional Waters reach the Grand Valley Trail, SC Johnson Trail and Gordon Glaves Memorial Pathway are the predominate sections, some forming part of the Trans Canada Trail system. These trails are well maintained by the GRCA, City of Brantford, County of Brant and a host of volunteers from the Brant Waterways Foundation and other supporters. See The Gordon Glaves Memorial Pathways pamphlet for more detailed information on the trails.



### Exceptional Waters Ethics

River travel is available to anyone. Please keep in mind areas of the shoreline are private property. As such, the owner's permission is required to land or trespass. Please respect private property rights. As river stewards we ask that litter, pet waste and graffiti not be left on the water or the shore. When you have passed there should be no trace that you were ever there. We hope you enjoy your visit to the Grand River and leave it as good as or better than when you arrived.



Copyright © Grand River Conservation Authority, 2004  
May not be reproduced or altered in any way. The GRCA takes no responsibility for, nor guarantees, the accuracy of all the information contained within the map. Trail routes are approximate.

### Water Safety

The Grand River can have widely divergent flows, especially after short heavy rainfall. Plans to travel the river after heavy rain should be re-examined. Standard waterway precautions should be practiced.

#### If you are canoeing:

- Check the river conditions before leaving by accessing the GRCA's River Information Line at (519) 621-2763 x519 or [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca). If the river levels are high, perhaps the outing should be changed or postponed.
- Follow boating safety regulations and always wear a life jacket when boating. Make sure it fits well and is fastened properly.
- Stay seated and never fool around in a boat.
- Avoid boating near dams and other dangerous places.
- Leave the water if thunderstorms or lightning is approaching.

#### If you are fishing:

- Wade only where you can see the bottom and be aware that there may be holes or deeper water close to you.
- Be extra careful on slippery clay or loose stone banks.

