

Title: Forum touches on major issues facing the Grand River
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More than 400 people are expected to attend the eighth annual Grand River Watershed Water Forum on Sept. 19.

This year's event will touch on a number of major issues facing those living in the Grand River watershed ranging from population growth to climate change.

"What's interesting this year is that we've got some academics that know a lot about the Grand River and they also have national and international acclaim," said Dave Schultz, communications manger of the Grand River Conservation Authority.

The theme for the forum, Reflecting Change -- Mirrored in the Water, addresses the impact that human activities have on water quality and water supplies.

The nationally and internationally known speakers will address current water issues and show how research and applied science can help bring about improvements.

The roster of guest speakers includes University of Guelph Prof. Isobel Heathcote, who will speak on population growth, land use change and watershed management; James Bruce, Canadian policy representative for the Soil and Water Conservation Society, who will speak on climate change and water; Rob de Loe, Canada research chair in water management, from the University of Guelph, who will speak on water policy and governance -- getting it right; Eva G. Abal, scientific co-ordinator for South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Partnership in Brisbane, Australia, speaking on translating science into knowledge; and Mark Servos, Canada Research Chair in Water Quality Protection, University of Waterloo.

Also during the presentations Paul Emerson, chief executive officer of the GRCA, will present the sixth annual Grand River Watershed Report.

The forum will also include a panel discussion entitled Thinking Beyond the Status Quo with panelists Gerry Wheeler of the City of Guelph, Oliver M. Brandes of the POLIS Project on Ecological Governance at the University of Victoria, Jim Brickman of the Brick Brewing Co. and Don Lewis of the Ontario Centres of Excellence.

In addition to the presentations and panels, there will be displays and exhibits highlighting innovative water technologies and services, as well as the environmental programs of business, government agencies and environmental organizations.

The water forum takes place Sept. 19 from 8 a.m. to 330 p.m. at the head office of the GRCA, at 400 Clyde Rd.

Registration is open to the public and details about the program, speakers and registration (including an online registration process), can be found in the water forum section of the GRCA website at www.grandriver.ca.

The registration fee of \$90, or \$55 for students and seniors, includes lunch.

Ray Martin

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