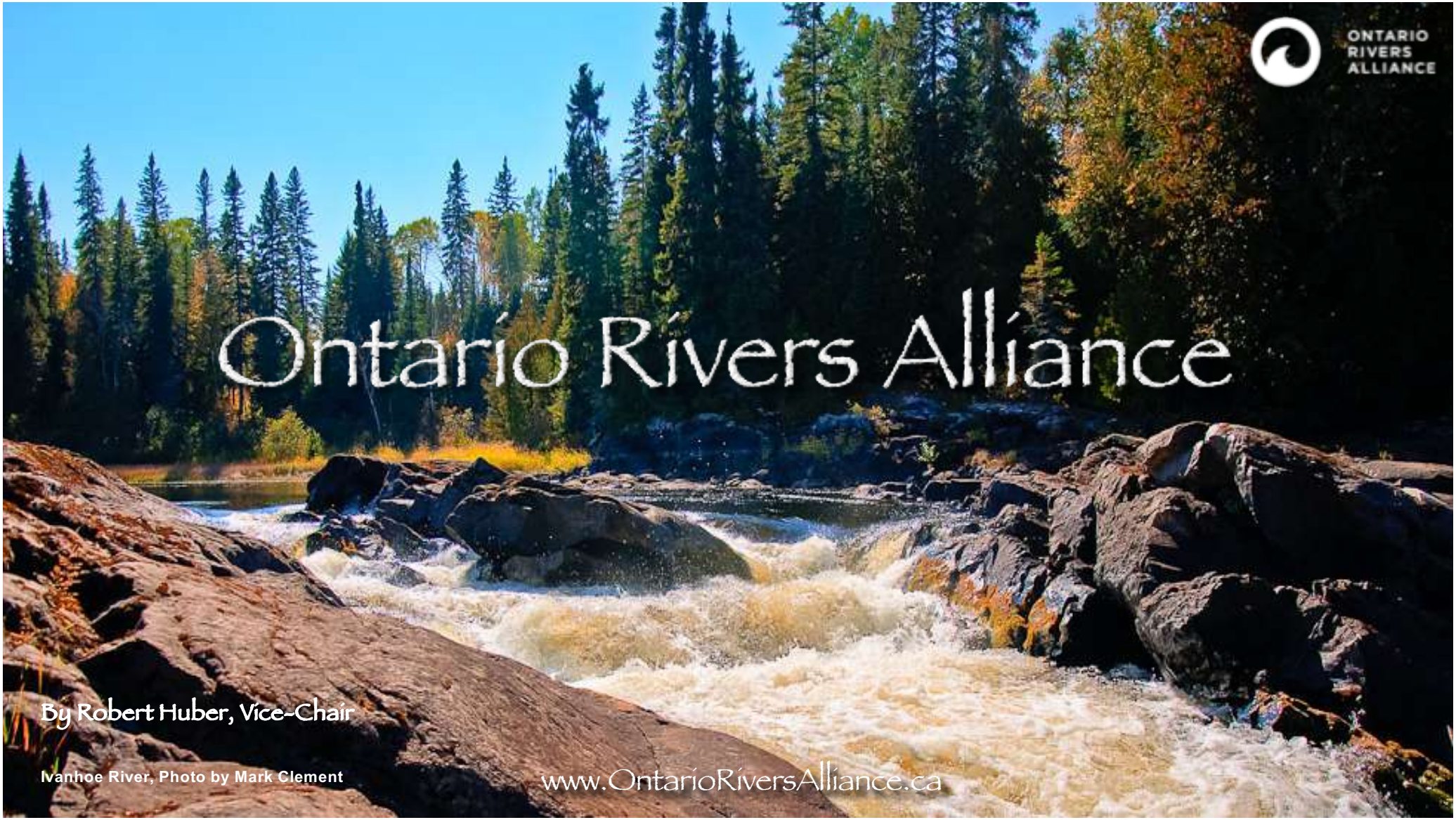
ONTARIO
RIVERS
ALLIANCE
Ontario Rivers Alliance
By Robert Huber, Vice-Chair
Ivanhoe River, Photo by Mark Clement
www.OntarioRiversAlliance.ca

About ORA

- Ontario Rivers Alliance (ORA)
- Not-for-Profit
- A mission to
  - Protect, conserve & restore Ontario rivers
  - Strong united voice
  - A BIG picture perspective
  - Collaborate & build alliances
  - Share information, strategies & tools
  - Influence legislation & policy

ONTARIO RIVERS ALLIANCE

What are ORA's Successes?

- Stopped 24 proposed hydroelectric dams on 12 river systems
- Partnered with MNRF & CVCA on Rudd Dam Removal Project, West Credit River
- Springbank Dam, Thames River, London
  - Campaign resulted in a unanimous Council decision to decommission
- Amendments to the Class EA for Waterpower
- Intervenor status in the now terminated Energy East Pipeline Application
- Advocating for the decommissioning of several Ontario dams

Climate Change

- A future of Climate uncertainty:
  - Increasing frequency & magnitude of rain events
  - Less snow & more rain in winter
  - Each degree of temperature rise can increase air's water capacity by $7^{0}{}_{0}$
  - Toronto Climate Model predicts – over next 30 years:
    - Projected average winter temperature increase of 5.7 degrees Celsius
    - Projected average summer temperature increase by 3.8 degrees Celsius
- Communities & infrastructure must be climate resilient
- Infrastructure planning must take climate change into account
  - Failure of an upstream dam can lead to cascading failure of downstream infrastructure
  - Look beyond a 1:100 year storm to a 1:1000 year flood event
- Must consider increasing climate effects in dam's viability and economics

Naturalization of the Speed River

Implications & Benefits of Naturalization

- Naturalization was **$4.9M** – recently changed to **$5.3M**
  - No future Life-cycle costs for operation, maintenance & retirement
  - Healthy Natural Environment:
    - Water quality & temperature will improve significantly
    - Cooler & deeper channel
    - Sediment & nutrients move freely downstream
    - Connectivity & natural processes are restored
    - Aquatic habitat for fishery & Species at Risk is restored
    - Fish Passage
    - Tourism - boating & fishing
  - Increased resilience to Climate Change

Implications & Benefits of Naturalization

- Closely aligns with the City of Cambridge's Strategic Plan
  - Meets fiscal, safety & environmental objectives
- Reduces risk of upstream & downstream flooding
- Risk of public life & property loss is significantly reduced & safety is addressed
- Short & long-term liability to the City is significantly reduced
- Regulators/agencies would be in full support of naturalization
  - Availability of Federal & Provincial funding for habitat restoration
  - Local agencies would participate in a dam removal project
- ORA & other key partners could assist in funding & naturalization process
- Loss of a Pond/Reservoir

Naturalization – Instream Rock Structures

Implications & Benefits of Rebuild

- Dam Rebuild was **$6.3M** – now **$5.4M**
  - Life-cycle costs were **$8.6M** – now $30K/year for 100 years = **$3M**
  - Uncertainty of increasing climate effects
    - 1:100 year flood return is insufficient
  - Increased risk of dam failure & flooding
  - Risks will Increase over the dam's life
  - Risk to public safety
  - Loss of life and property over the short & long-term
  - Liability issues
  - Degraded water quality & health of riverine ecosystem
  - Financing costs
  - Escalating costs & burden on all taxpayers to cater to a few
  - Seasonal recreational reservoir - could last 100 years
  - Tourism

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Naturalization with Offline Dam

ORA Partners in 16 May 2018 Submission

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FRESHWATER™ FUTURE
Ensuring the Healthy Future of Our Waters

CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION

EST. 1988 ANGLERS.ORG THAMES RIVER ANGLERS ASSOCIATION

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS AND HUNTERS

(100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, including 740-member clubs)

Ontario Nature

EARTHROOTS

Trout Unlimited CANADA
Truite Illimitée CANADA

3,800 members

OFAH Zone J (23,500 members)

TRR

Thames River Rally