

CREDIT VALLEY CONSERVATION

CURRENTS



YOUR CONNECTION TO THE CREDIT RIVER WATERSHED

Conservation *through* Collaboration





Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) is a local watershed agency that works to conserve, restore, develop and manage our watershed's natural resources.

We are a team of foresters, engineers, biologists, ecologists, hydrologists, hydrogeologists, planners, educators and managers who deliver collaborative conservation services and programs.

A partnership of 13 municipalities, CVC was created to manage water, land and wildlife resources for the benefit of over 750,000 residents of the Credit River watershed. A 12-member Board of Directors appointed by the regional and municipal councils oversees our work and votes on Authority policies, programs and budgets to ensure a healthy natural environment that benefits all partners. In this way, decisions are made on an integrated watershed basis.

The *Conservation Authorities Act* is the provincial legislative framework for CVC and all 36 conservation authorities in the province. One of CVC's key responsibilities under the Act is to protect life and minimize property damage from flooding and erosion. Working with provincial and municipal governments, we manage a flood warning system and a network of monitoring stations to forecast, track and report high flows. An advance warning system allows municipal and other agencies to engage their emergency plans.

The Credit River watershed spans 1,000 square kilometres and is defined by the area of land that drains into the Credit River and its tributaries.

We have legislated responsibilities in land use planning. We serve as scientific advisors to our municipal partners regarding the environmental aspects of official planning and development.

With numerous stakeholders, we carry out programs to improve surface and ground water quality; ensure adequate water supplies; restore land and water ecosystems; help landowners enhance natural environments of their own properties; and manage public lands for current and future generations.

Stewarding natural resources means constantly balancing the needs of people with what nature can sustainably provide. We deliver programs and services in partnership with government agencies, environmental and non-government organizations, businesses, universities, rural and urban landowners, school children, families, anglers, nature enthusiasts, farmers, urbanites and more.

Collaboration is the essence of Credit Valley Conservation. Today, urbanization and climate change are huge stresses. We cannot do it alone.

We hope you join us at the riverside, in forests or at a strategy meeting... working together for the health of the Credit River watershed. 

Watershed Health Check

In March, as part of a coordinated effort by Conservation Ontario, CVC released its Credit River Watershed Report Card. Just like school report cards, the Credit River Watershed Report Card grades the health of the watershed using letter grades from A (Excellent) to F (Very Poor) for a five year period (2007 - 2011).



The Watershed Report Card examined the quality of water resources found both underground (groundwater) and in streams (surface water), and measured the size and health of forests in the watershed. The report card showed that groundwater quality was good to excellent in many regions with some shallow wells showing poor water quality due to localized sources of pollution. Surface water quality and forest condition received wide ranging grades from B to F, generally with lowest grades found in urbanized areas of the middle and lower watershed.

The scientific data used to assign letter grades for the report card were collected as part of

ESSENTIAL Collaboration

Protecting people and the environment, together



CVC's Integrated Watershed Monitoring Program (IWMP), an indispensable long-term record of environmental change.

"You can't manage what you don't measure" is a popular saying in business which applies equally well to the environment. Unless you measure something you don't know if it is getting better or worse and how quickly it is changing. By providing consistent, high quality measurements of environmental data, IWMP is able to examine long-term trends in ecosystem health and pinpoint which environmental variables are improving, which are getting worse and which areas of the watershed most need protecting or restoring.

CVC's Watershed Report Card used a recognizable format to report conditions based on letter grades. For those seeking a more detailed analysis of the long-term health of the watershed, we have also produced the on-line Water-

Since 1999, IWMP has collected data from 289 unique stations throughout the Credit River watershed.

shed Health Report at www.creditvalleyca.ca/watershedhealthreport. The health report is more technical than the report card, and discusses changes over time since 1999 on everything from water temperature to fish community health. It will be continually updated as new data becomes available through the IWMP.

Based in part on the data analyzed in the report card and the health report, CVC is working with our municipal partners to develop a Credit River Watershed Natural Heritage Strategy. This planning strategy will help maintain the health of the Credit River watershed by identifying priority areas for conservation and stewardship. With help from our many partners, local stakeholders and volunteers, CVC is actively working towards a healthy and sustainable watershed.

With continued collaboration and effort, we can all help our watershed become a straight A student! 

SOAR!

Growing together in faith and learning



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Keeping Cool this Summer

Looking for ideas to keep cool this summer? Consider some hints from nature and the birds, animals and amphibians at CVC conservation areas.

Maybe you'll be like a frog – lounging around the edge of a pool or pond, ready to leap in at a moment's notice. Or will you stay under water with just your eyes peering out to ensure no one is sneaking up on you. Ducks like mallards and wood ducks paddle around lakes on their bellies, dipping their heads under when they see a tasty snack. Island Lake Conservation Area offers swimming this summer, with beach and picnic areas too.

Maybe you're like the great blue heron that doesn't swim, but likes to keep his feet in the

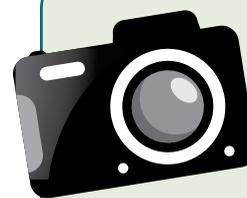


water. This bird loves to fish, a great summer activity along the Credit River, at Terra Cotta and Island Lake Conservation Areas or Ken Whillans Resource Management Area.

Are you more like a snake, stretching out in the morning sun or sunbathing on a rock? Snakes love the heat because they are ectotherms – animals that regulate their body heat using external sources. When a snake gets too hot, it slithers down a hole in the ground, a cool dark place like your basement. Salamanders, who breathe through their skin, spend the summer under leaf litter where it is moist and cool. Do as these creatures do: come explore and hide in the caves and crevices of the Niagara Escarpment at Belfountain or Limehouse Conservation Areas.

Some animals avoid the heat by napping through the hottest part of the day. Rabbits, bats and skunks are all crepuscular (pronounced "cre-PUS-cu-lar") meaning they are most active at dawn and dusk, when the weather is slightly cool and there is just enough light to see. Have you ever experienced a gorgeous sunrise at Rattray Marsh Conservation Area? Make this your summer to try.

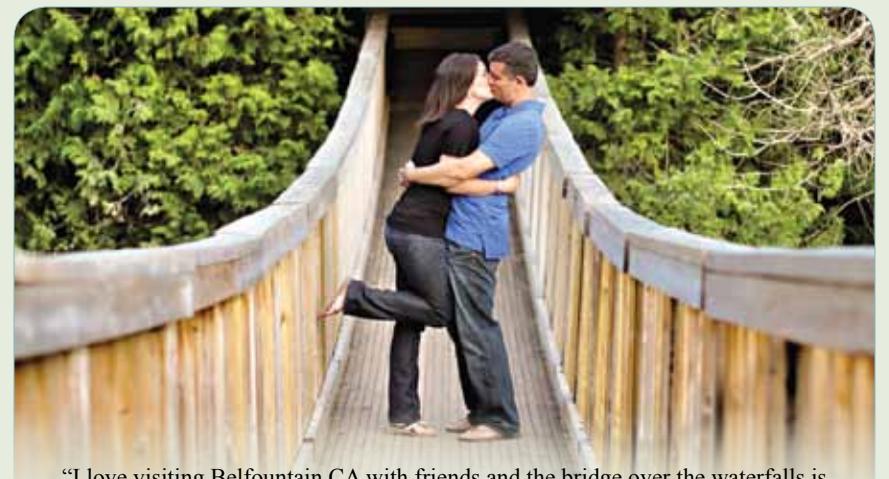
To learn about other cool summer experiences at CVC conservation areas, visit: www.creditvalleyca.ca/activities.



Show & Tell PHOTO CONTEST

Snap a photo of you, your friends and/or your family enjoying one of our parks and tell us why you love to visit. Upload the photo to the "photo contest" tab on our Facebook page for a chance to win some great prizes.

For full contest details and official rules:
www.creditvalleyca.ca/showandtell



"I love visiting Belfountain CA with friends and the bridge over the waterfalls is always a highlight!" Pam Breese, 2012 Photo Contest winner.



Photo by Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Preparing Ourselves for Alien Invaders

Don't let this seemingly innocent little beetle fool you. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is on a mission and all it cares about are scrumptious ash trees.

EAB is an invasive insect, meaning it's not native to our region and has devastating effects on native plants and animals. Originally from Asia, EAB is spreading throughout southern Ontario, into the Credit River watershed, killing North American ash trees.

EAB larvae (young) feed just beneath the bark of ash trees and disrupt the movement of water and nutrients. This pest continues to spread north through Ontario by flying from ash tree to ash tree. The rapid, large-scale spread of EAB, however, is facilitated by transporting firewood, nursery stock and logs. EAB has already killed

millions of trees but early detection can slow its spread and damage.

CVC is working with its partners to monitor the spread of EAB throughout the Credit River watershed. By 2009, EAB was detected in the urban southern areas of the watershed, including Mississauga, Brampton and Oakville. CVC is deploying a series of traps in the central and northern areas of the watershed to track the spread of EAB. EAB traps are an early warning system that alert CVC staff and local residents to the presence of the pest.

A CVC EAB Response Plan is currently being developed to address this threat. Widespread control of EAB is not possible but a response plan can help manage the impact EAB has on watershed forests.

Residents play a significant role in helping control EAB by not moving firewood and monitoring ash trees for evidence of EAB activity. For more information on how to identify the signs and symptoms of EAB, visit the CVC website at www.creditvalleyca.ca/eab.

Landowners in the Credit River watershed thinking about replanting a woodlot with alternative native tree species can learn about CVC's tree planting and reforestation programs at www.creditvalleyca.ca/forestry. 

Landowner's Action Protects Municipal Drinking Water

"One landowner really can make a difference" states Mark Eastman, CVC's Agricultural Extension Coordinator.

One noteworthy example of private land stewardship is on the farm of Geoff and Shanna Maltby located outside the Town of Acton. They have helped protect their local drinking water by changing several of their on-farm practices: fencing their horses away from a wetland and stream to protect water quality; completing a nutrient management plan and constructing a concrete-roofed manure storage to help decrease

nutrient run-off; and decommissioning an old abandoned well on their property to decrease risk of contamination to ground water.

Over the last two years, 41 similar projects have been undertaken by rural landowners in the Credit River watershed as part of a Ministry of Environment program to protect the quality of municipal drinking water sources.



A fenced area for horses away from streams and wetlands helps protect water quality.

"The program created a terrific opportunity to assist us with making environmental upgrades to the farm that otherwise would not have been affordable. We are happy that we have been able to contribute to the protection of Acton's drinking water," says Geoff.

For more information on CVC's landowner assistance programs please contact Mark Eastman by calling 1-800-668-5557 ext 430 or by email at: meastman@creditvalleyca.ca. 



Christmas in July

Christmas trees give the gift of habitat. More than 300 Christmas trees from Peel Region have gone from curbside to riverside.

In the Upper Credit Conservation Area, Christmas trees have found new life. The trees have restored crumbling riverbanks, narrowed the channel and provided hiding spots and shade for the resident coldwater fish. Wedged in the riverbanks and angled downstream, the trees help collect sediment to control the river's overwidening girth and reshape its flow. Three years after the first trees went in, parts of the river have narrowed from 22 metres to 15 metres and the river is cooler and deeper. This provides better fish habitat. Rebuilt banks are sturdy enough to walk on.

The Christmas cheer doesn't stop there. That holiday feeling can be found in the waters at Ken Whillans Resource Management Area. For years, sunfish, rock bass, largemouth bass and pike were in desperate need of protective cover and spawning habitat in ponds that were once a quarry. Now the fish have their wish. Christmas trees paired with pallets and weighed down with

stones have formed underwater habitat with hiding holes, nesting nooks and great food.

Extensive aquatic habitat restoration projects take years of planning and collaboration, and can be costly—a lot like the holidays. Volunteers from Izaak Walton Fly Fishing Club, Trout Unlimited, CVC's Conservation Youth Corps, Mississauga Bassmasters and others have donated approximately 2,300 hours to habitat improvements through Christmas tree reuse. In addition, project management, guidance, monitoring, review, donations and funding have been generously provided by partners such as Trout Unlimited, Mississauga Bassmasters, Izaak Walton Fly Fishing Club, Region of Peel Public Works, Ministry of Natural Resources, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Home Depot and CVC staff. Actual costs were well below the industry average due to the support and collaboration of all teams. Check our events calendar for future restoration volunteer opportunities at www.creditvalleyca.ca/events.

By reusing Christmas trees, these rehabilitation teams have improved both land and aquatic habitats. Now if only they could reuse Christmas cake... 



Grasslands Growing Hope

It will be the dedication and collective impact of landowners that help threatened grassland birds in the Credit River watershed recover from the brink of extinction.

Landowners with pastures, hayfields, meadows and native prairie can give birds a fighting chance by providing grassland habitat for four at-risk species in the Credit River watershed—Eastern meadowlark, bobolink, common nighthawk and Henslow's sparrow. Grassland birds have declined more than any other type of bird in North America—more than 90 per cent—and their decline continues.

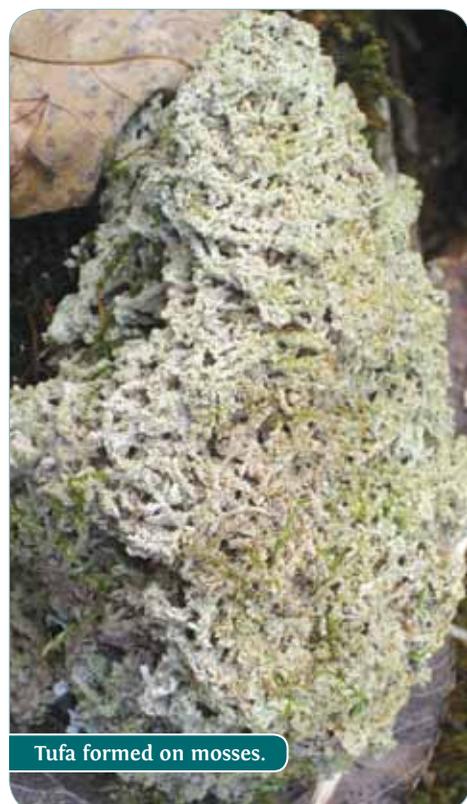
Grassland habitat is at a premium. Agricultural lands are often the only option for grassland bird nesting grounds. With their nests on or near the ground in agricultural fields, grassland birds are extremely vulnerable to harvesting while raising their young.

Cutting hay higher, above six inches, will avoid crushing nests with young. Cutting fields in a slow, spiral pattern from the center gives

birds time to fly out to safety. Planting late-season hay and/or delaying harvests to July 15 provide the time needed to finish nesting and for the young to fly away.

Connected grasslands, like those supplied by neighbouring farms, provide the habitat many of these birds so desperately need. Rotating crops and pastures in which grasses are left to regenerate naturally will provide more nesting habitat to birds each season. This system can increase pasture productivity and result in improved soil health and higher quality forage. Restoring fields to permanent natural grasslands provides not only bird habitat, it builds onto connected watershed areas that link wildlife and provide benefit to water systems.

Credit Valley Conservation staff would be pleased to meet with landowners to offer advice on how to encourage grassland birds to visit your property. Funding may be available. Contact Mark Eastman for more information at meastman@creditvalleyca.ca or 905-670-1615 ext. 430. For additional tips, visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/grassland-factsheet.



Tufa formed on mosses.

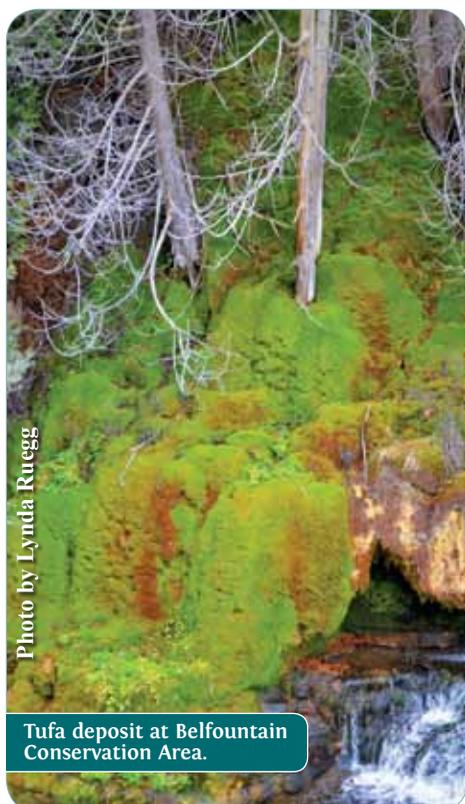


Photo by Lynda Ruegg

Tufa deposit at Belfountain Conservation Area.

Teaming Up for Brook Trout Recovery

When 12 years of data from Credit Valley Conservation's Integrated Watershed Monitoring Program indicated a significant decline in brook trout, there was no doubt that a recovery program was needed.

In partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and with input from groups such as the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Trout Unlimited Canada and others, a recovery strategy is being developed.

Brook trout in the Credit River—some of the best brook trout habitat in southern Ontario—are found in rural areas. The presence of brook trout is an indicator of good groundwater supplies and water quality because they are sensitive to even slight changes in water quality and quantity. They prefer cold, clear, well-oxygenated streams and lakes, as commonly found in the upper and middle areas in the Credit River watershed.

Details of exact causes of brook trout decline are not yet firmly established, but at least six major issues play a role: sewage treatment, urbanization, climate change, water taking, barriers and species competition.

Workshops to develop the recovery program have already begun. Credit Valley Conservation and the Ministry of Natural Resources are working together to develop the strategy in 2013 with input from all concerned stakeholders. To find out more, contact Jon Clayton, jclayton@creditvalleyca.ca or 905-670-1615 ext. 502.



Rare Rock Discovered at Belfountain

At Belfountain Conservation Area, the West Credit River skips along the rugged rock of the Niagara Escarpment and springs flow down the valley slopes, making it a popular scenic destination.

Along some of the springs are pieces of chalky crumbly rock. Until recently, the origin and identity of these rocks was a mystery. That was until CVC's Natural Heritage staff, assisted by staff at the University of Toronto, the Ministry of Natural Resources and others, solved the case.

The rock is called tufa. It is a form of limestone created from calcium and other elements in spring water that become solid under suitable conditions. This process, known as precipitation,

is the same process that forms stalactites and stalagmites in caves. Tufa formation is rare, occurring at only a handful of locations in Ontario.

Over time, plants can grow on tufa. These plants must be able to grow on solid rock, without soil and in flowing water. Some mosses are specially adapted to such habitats, including some that are provincially rare.

In addition to sometimes sustaining rare mosses, tufa habitats may also support amphibian, dragonfly and damselfly breeding. This is because little pools of water can develop over top of the rock. These spring-fed pools may also be an important water source for wildlife.

The next time you visit Belfountain Conservation Area, you can view the tufa for yourself. Simply walk onto the foot bridge and look to the slope on the south side of the river. You will see a gorgeous blanket of moss in shades of green and red that mostly hides the rock it grows on. Look closely, and you will see a small patch of whitish tufa peeking through. Get a glimpse of a rare Ontario rock at the Belfountain Conservation Area.



We're protecting a clean water future

At RBC®, we know that access to clean, fresh water will remain an important economic and environmental issue, especially in our growing towns and cities. In 2007, we made a 10-year, \$50 million commitment to the RBC Blue Water Project™ to help everyone have access to drinkable, swimmable, fishable water, in Canada and around the world.

We are proud to support Credit Valley Conservation Foundation as part of our goal to ensure clean, fresh water for all Canadians.

Visit any RBC Royal Bank branch on June 14 to learn more about the RBC Blue Water Project and for your chance to win* a \$100 RBC Blue Water Project Visa[‡] Gift Card.



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Rattray Marsh Restoration Begins

Rattray Marsh is getting a long-awaited facelift—clearing out carp and soil build-up and reawakening what was once a vibrant, native wetland. As the last remaining baymouth coastal marsh between Toronto and Burlington, Mississauga's Rattray Marsh is a rare natural resource.

Over decades, upstream development around Sheridan Creek has washed excess soil into the wetland burying organic soils, insects and plants. This has contributed to shallower water and led to poor water quality—prime conditions for non-native carp. The carp have caused further destruction by outcompeting fish, uprooting underwater plants and stirring up sediment (affecting water quality).

A multi-phase, multi-year restoration plan to revive the native ecosystem has begun to remove sediment and invasive carp and reintroduce native species (e.g., plants, insects, fish).

From spring 2013 onwards, carp will be blocked from entering key habitat and spawning grounds, without hindering other species. Work will be done by CVC staff and volunteers with support from the Government of Ontario.

Sediment removal, or “dredging,” will happen in winter to minimize ecosystem impacts. Wildlife will be discouraged from settling in dredging areas, e.g., fencing to keep fish, amphibians and reptiles out. A separate project, but key to success of the restoration, is work with the City of Mississauga upstream to stop the flow of sediment from Sheridan Creek.

Work to re-establish native species will occur as soon as the first phases of restoration prove successful. Many species will return naturally. During restoration activities, some areas will be closed for public safety but the marsh will still be readily accessible.

An action plan of this magnitude plays a huge role in priorities and programs of Credit Valley Conservation and its many partners who, collaboratively, are tackling water quality, restoring habitat and sustaining an outdoor recreational area. The Rattray Marsh Protection Association, South Peel Naturalists Club, Ontario Ministry

of Natural Resources, City of Mississauga, Mississauga Bassmasters, Enbridge Gas and the Region of Peel are part of the planning, hands-on implementation, and/or financial support of the restoration.

Restoring Rattray Marsh supports CVC's Lake Ontario Integrated Shoreline Strategy (LOISS) which has a goal to build awareness of environmental challenges facing the shoreline and to find ways to restore it. 

Your Favourite River



Standing on the banks of the Credit River in a steep-sided, lush valley in the middle of Mississauga, it's easy to see that rivers – and the land they shape around them – are special places.

Rivers have given rise to great cities of the world. They provide fresh water for billions of people. Sometimes they're considered sacred. Sometimes they're in trouble – maybe from pollution, dams or over-development. Sometimes rivers inspire and unite the people around them.

We live in the Great Lakes Basin, the largest system of fresh water on earth and, according to Environment Canada, containing about 18 per cent of all fresh surface water on the planet. But many people would not consider themselves “from” here. The RiverWorld Project, supported by the RBC Blue Water Project, is exploring what rivers and fresh water mean to different people, particularly new immigrants, in this part of the planet.

Living in the Great Lakes Basin, it's easy to take our rivers, lakes and safe, abundant drinking water for granted. People coming here from other parts of the world, however, can have very different perspectives perhaps shaped by experi-

ences with toxic pollution, catastrophic drought, or unsafe drinking water. For newcomers, it may be difficult to understand how vital fresh water is to Canadians, and how rivers have shaped this land and the identity of the different people who now call this country home.

Sometimes our rivers go unnoticed. A person could drive across a high bridge over a deep valley in one of Canada's largest cities and barely realize the river below. But, no matter where you're from, there's a river there.

So which river holds a special place in your life, or in your family history? Perhaps it's the Ganges? Or the Danube? Maybe it's the Indus, or the Yangtze? Or maybe, it's the Credit.

Look for the RiverWorld Project in select libraries and community agencies. To learn more, or to bring RiverWorld to your library, LINC class, community centre or cultural group, contact education@creditvalleyca.ca or visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/riverworld. 

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Whirlpool Canada celebrated its **100th Anniversary** in 2011 and marked the occasion by continuing to introduce products that help consumers save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Whirlpool manufactures and markets more than **470 ENERGY STAR** qualified major appliances for the **American and Canadian Markets** - more than any other appliance manufacturer.

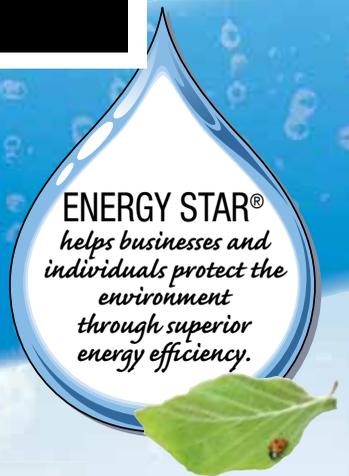
2012

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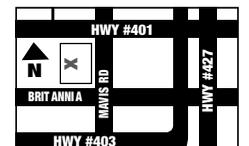
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Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of Environment (front, centre) joins CVC Board members, partners and staff to break ground at IMAX in August 2012.



Water Innovation Through Collaboration

During a storm, rainfall picks up any number of pollutants as it hits the ground: gasoline, motor oil, heavy metals, trash, fertilizers and pesticides.

In a non-urbanized environment, rainfall will slowly infiltrate into the ground, where it is naturally filtered through the soil. In an urbanized environment, however, where there is limited natural ground cover, rainfall runs off roofs, parking lots and roads, into catch basins. From there, the water drains into creeks which flow into Lake Ontario, polluting the primary source of drinking water for over 8 million Ontarians.

But what if we were to treat rainfall where it falls, before it enters the sewer system? CVC's water resources team aims to do just that through a practice called low impact development (LID). LID uses nature as a model to capture and treat rainwater and snow melt where it falls. This stormwater filters and infiltrates slowly into the ground so cleaner water flows into nearby streams, preventing flooding of municipal storm systems and reducing stream erosion. LID turns stormwater into a resource instead of a hazard.

CVC has collaborated with schools, municipalities and businesses to build 19 LID sites

throughout the Credit River watershed. Each site is customized with innovative stormwater technologies to suit local hydrology and geology. In all of these sites we have learned a valuable lesson: innovation in stormwater technology produces the best results when we partner with others.

The IMAX parking lot retrofit project in Mississauga's Sheridan Science and Technology Park is a great example of innovation through collaboration. In the fall of 2012, CVC worked with seven partners to create a green parking lot at IMAX Corporation's head office with funding support through the Province of Ontario's Showcasing Water Innovation Fund.

The goal of this retrofitted parking lot was to collect and filter stormwater while reducing runoff. Several industry leaders contributed to the parking lot design and monitoring efforts, including Aquafor

Beech, University of Guelph, IMAX, Unilock, Imbrium, Maxxam and CVC.

The parking lot features permeable pavers, as well as innovative bioswales or "rain gardens" combined with underground water filtration systems. After construction was completed, CVC began monitoring the parking lot to measure performance of the green technologies. By bringing so many industry leaders together, the parking lot retrofit truly is a win-win situation - IMAX employees have more parking, products and services of partnering businesses are showcased, and 8 million Ontarians have cleaner drinking water.

CVC is committed to collaborating with municipalities, businesses, developers and home owners to develop a stormwater program that will help establish Ontario as a water leader. To learn more about LID and how you can contribute, visit www.bealeader.ca.



Flood Forecasting Protects You

Over the past 10 years, high intensity, short duration rainfall events have increased in the Greater Toronto Area.

These extreme events put private property and public infrastructure at risk. Weather related water damages are now the leading cause of private property loss in Canada, amounting to approximately \$1.7 billion per year nationally. Flooding doesn't just cause damage to homes. Floods also damage critical infrastructure, close roads and destroy natural habitat.

CVC works closely with watershed municipalities developing flood risk reduction and mitigation plans. These strategically address threats and important impacts to communities and infrastructure. We are responsible for several initiatives designed to help protect communities against flooding, including real-time flood forecasting, warning and emergency response.

CVC shares responsibility for flood contingency planning with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and local municipalities. With MNR, we monitor weather conditions to forecast potential flood events such as spring

melts or severe storms. When a flood is anticipated, we issue warnings to municipalities, who coordinate the necessary flood emergency response. In addition to forecasting and issuing bulletins, we also operate conservation authority dams and flood control structures, provide advice to municipalities to prevent or reduce flood impacts, and maintain communication between municipalities and monitoring centres during a flood.

One of the key tools needed to properly monitor and forecast flood conditions in the watershed is our network of real-time streamflow and rainfall gauges. These gauges transmit data every 15 minutes to inform staff of current water levels and flow conditions in various rivers, streams and creeks. This real-time data gives municipal and other emergency staff critical lead times when managing flood emergencies. It also helps identify cost-effective flood reduction measures to improve community resilience to climate change.

In 2013, CVC will expand our real-time gauge network by adding 20 streamflow, six water quality and eight rainfall stations, with funding support from the Region of Peel.

A real-time gauge network monitors and forecasts flood conditions throughout the Credit River watershed.

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Toronto and Region Conservation for "The Living City"



Terra Cotta Conservation Area



There's a new initiative in conservation areas this summer called 'Healthy Hikes'. The program, designed to get more Ontario residents walking and hiking on Ontario's conservation area trails, runs from May 1 to October 31, 2013.

This initiative includes a 'Healthy Hikes Challenge' where registered participants log the number of hours they spend walking or hiking at a conservation area. Participants attending a Healthy Hikes event at a CVC conservation area can receive



an additional 200 points toward the challenge.

At the end of the challenge, all registered participants have a chance to win prizes. For more information, visit www.healthyhikes.ca.



Check our website for great Conservation Area coupons, contests and park promotions.
www.creditvalleyca.ca/parkpromos

Conservation Areas for Your Good Health

Have you enjoyed one of our conservation areas lately? Check out some of our popular regular programs or many new events happening throughout the year:

Belfountain CA

 Heart Healthy Hike	Jul. 6, Sept. 21
Yoga in the Park NEW	Jul. 6, Aug. 14
Theatre in the Park – “Stellaluna” NEW	Jul. 12, Jul. 19

Island Lake CA

Yoga in the Park	Jun. 26, Jul. 30, Aug. 28
Island Lake Bass Fishing Tournament	Jul. 6 - 7
Theatre in the Park – “Stellaluna” NEW	Jul. 13, Jul. 20
 Brain Boost Hike	Aug. 31

Ken Whillans Resource Management Area

 Hikes for Your Health	Jul. 1
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Ratray Marsh CA

Uproot Uprize: Help Control the Spread of Invasive Species	Jun. 8
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Terra Cotta CA

Yoga in the Park NEW	Jun. 15, Jul. 20, Aug. 10
Help Protect Terra Cotta from Invasive Species	Jun. 22
Family Fun Day & Lemonade NEW	Jul. 1, Jul. 14, Aug. 5, Aug. 18
Theatre in the Park – “Stellaluna” NEW	Jul. 14, Jul. 21
 Forest Bath Hike	Oct. 14
Halloween Haunted Forest	Oct. 25 - 26
Christmas at Terra Cotta NEW	Nov. 30 - Dec. 1

Event dates are subject to change. Please visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/events for the most up-to-date event information, to register and to find out about other CVC events in your area.

To enjoy the benefits of being a member, visit: www.ourcredit.ca.



Yoga at Island Lake Conservation Area

Proactive Plastic Policing

Every year shoreline cleanups collect volumes of plastic bags, straws and fast food containers. In Ontario, 108,000 plastic bags and bottles were collected in one day during the 2012 Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up.



Plastic never goes away. When it “breaks down” it becomes millions of miniscule plastic pieces. Plastic garbage in the ocean is responsible for killing thousands of sea turtles, seabirds and other marine wildlife from eating plastic or entanglement. Plastics are being carried to the ocean by rivers and lakes. Studies are just beginning to investigate the impacts of plastics in our freshwater systems, but it’s anticipated that the effects on wildlife will be just as devastating as in the ocean.

It’s time to get proactive. Head off a problem before it’s too late and learn from ocean impacts. Kick start your own efforts to reduce plastic garbage to keep our Great Lakes clean.

TAKE ACTION

- Use reusable shopping bags.
- Use compostable and biodegradable materials whenever possible.
- Refuse excess packaging. Avoid polystyrene foam as it has very low recycling rates.
- Avoid one-time use plastics. Bring your own refillable, reusable containers and items such as cutlery, metal water bottles, take-out mugs, thermoses and snack containers.
- Buy downloadable music, games and videos to avoid plastic products and packaging.
- When buying plastics, choose #1 (PETE) or #2 (HDPE)—the most commonly recycled.
- Volunteer at a river- or lake-side cleanup.
- Talk to your family and friends about reducing their plastic use.

Message from the Chair of CVC

From our inception, CVC has worked with our municipal partners to help protect life and minimize property damage from flooding and erosion.

We manage and enhance water, land and natural resources. Challenges such as ongoing urban intensification and climate change are adding to these responsibilities. Indeed, they demonstrate how crucial our role is in protecting human health, safety and the environment.

This edition’s theme, “Conservation through Collaboration” speaks to our history as well as current priorities and initiatives we have underway with landowners, corporations, government and non-government organizations as well as community groups and local businesses.

CVC prides itself on bringing together diverse stakeholders with shared interests, be they species recovery, restoring native ecosystems, or protecting drinking water supplies. Developing management strategies and monitoring watershed health is a responsibility we share with partners to ensure our watershed continues to provide critical benefits such as clean air; pure and abundant water; diversified wildlife; and protected green spaces.

At this time, on behalf of the CVC Board of Directors, I would like to recognize our recently-retired CAO Rae Horst. Under her leadership, CVC strengthened partnerships and built capacity that championed environmental causes, laid a foundation for continued success and left a legacy for protected natural heritage and resources.

To learn more about how you can become involved, visit: www.creditvalleyca.ca.

Pat Mullin,
CVC Chair



Vital Natural Connections

Patches of natural area throughout the watershed form a large connected system that supports a diversity of life.

Isolated areas are not large enough or diverse enough to support wildlife populations. Almost half of the wildlife in the Credit River watershed rely on more than one habitat for survival. Frogs, toads and salamanders move from breeding areas in spring, to foraging grounds in summer and hibernation spots in fall. Birds like the great horned owl nest in forests but hunt in meadows nearby.

The Credit River Valley is one of the largest natural “highways” in the watershed. It provides a link between Lake Ontario and the Greenbelt with rivers, streams and land connecting woodlands, meadows and wetlands.



Photo by Carl Hiebert
Credit River 2002

Animals and plants rely on these vital green “highways” and “corridors” to move across the landscape to find food, to reproduce and to migrate. Keeping connected systems of natural areas for wildlife is one of the most important conservation actions we can undertake to mitigate the impacts of habitat loss and climate change. A connected natural system is also important for local residents. A healthy system provides ecological services such as clean air and water, flood control, and natural spaces for

recreation, exercise and nature appreciation.

CVC is partnering with our municipalities and watershed experts to develop a Credit River Watershed Natural Heritage System to identify priority areas for conservation and stewardship. With partner and landowner collaboration, we can help build important natural connections for healthy people, wildlife and ecosystems.

For more information visit: www.creditvalleyca.ca/natural-heritage-system.

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Credit Valley Conservation **FOUNDATION**
LANDSCAPES for LIFE

The Credit Valley Conservation Foundation is a registered environmental charity that raises funds and awareness in support of the conservation projects carried out by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC). We recently embarked on a major fundraising campaign entitled Landscapes for Life. Our goal is to raise \$2.5 million by 2016.

Our Donors

The CVC Foundation sincerely appreciates the generous contributions of all those who have made an investment to help protect and conserve the lands and waters of the Credit River watershed. In 2012, the following foundations, corporations and individuals generously supported the invaluable conservation projects of Credit Valley Conservation.



Island Lake Conservation Area Community Trail Bridge.

Thank you.

\$100,000 - \$249,999

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Signature Fundraising Events

Canoe the Credit, A Paddle for River Conservation

Corporate Team Challenge & FREE Family Fun Paddle
 Sunday, June 23, 2013, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
 Don Rowing Club & Mississauga Canoe Club, Port Credit, ON

Friends of Island Lake 5th Annual Bass Derby

\$5000 in Cash Prizes!
 July 6 & 7, 2013
 Island Lake Conservation Area, Orangeville, ON
 Registration: \$45 one-day / \$70 two-day

3rd Annual Landscapes for Life Golf Tournament

In support of Healthy People and a Healthy Environment
 Monday, September 9, 2013. Tee-off at 8:30 a.m.
 Lionhead Golf & Country Club, Brampton, ON
 Fees: Foursome \$1600 before June 30 / \$1800 after June 30



CONNECT WITH CVC FOUNDATION



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