

Conservation Update



July, 2007

Reid Conservation Area Open to the Public

One of the most significant property donations ever to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation was made recently by Lena Reid and Jean Reid-Lye.

Following several years of discussion, this beautiful 69 hectare property in St. Clair Township was officially handed over to the Conservation Foundation. "We met several times with the donors and had long discussions. It was very clear how much this land meant to them - they truly were stewards of the land. We heard many stories about how they cared for the woodlots and how generations of the family learned about nature and conservation from this property" Norm Giffen, Chair of the Conservation Authority said.

"Jean and Lena told us they wished that the property be donated in memory of their parents and they expressed their wish that the property be preserved so future generations may learn from and enjoy this significant natural area" Giffen said. This property is extremely important in terms of its natural heritage. "It is so important, in fact, that it qualified to be designated as

Ecologically Significant by the Federal Government" Giffen said. In keeping with the donor's wishes, the Conservation Authority will be managing this property for its natural heritage features where people can walk and experience this beautiful and unique property.

The Reid Conservation Area is the 2nd largest land donation to the Foundation and is the 12th property donated to the Conservation Foundation. In total, the Foundation has received land donations of over 300 hectares which are managed by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. "There is no doubt, that this is one of the most significant of all these donations. We applaud the vision of the family in leaving such a wonderful legacy by preserving this biological treasure for future generations" Giffen said.

The Reid Conservation Area is located in St. Clair Township on Duthill Road between Kerr Line and Tulloch Line.

Level 1 Low Water Advisory Issued

Due to lower than normal rainfall and stream flow this summer, the St. Clair Region Low Water Response Committee confirmed a Level 1 Low Water Advisory on July 26. Over the period April 1 – June 30, Strathroy and Alvinston received less than 50% of the average rainfall expected. Sarnia received less than 70% while Petrolia only received about 60% of average rainfall for the same period. July was particularly dry with rainfall ranging between 60% to as low as 25% of average precipitation. Due to the dry conditions, stream flows along the main Sydenham River and its tributaries continue to decline. Currently stream flows across most of the watershed are less than 60% of what we would expect for this time of year.

A Level 1 Advisory is issued when rainfall drops below 80% of the average three month precipitation or streamflow drops below 70% of the lowest average summer month flow.



Pat Davidson, M.P., Steve Arnold, Mayor of St. Clair Township, Norm Giffen, SCRCA Chair and Larry Cornelis, a neighbour and well known naturalist, spoke at the official opening of the Reid Conservation Area on June 29.

Conservation Authority Awards Scholarships

Scott Odorizzi from North Lambton Secondary School and Justin Nicol from Lambton Central Collegiate and Vocational Institute were selected as the recipients of the A.W. Campbell Memorial Scholarship. These \$1,000 scholarships are presented to the top two candidates among the applicants for scholarships offered by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority.

Four Students: Ayla Charrington, Lambton Kent Secondary School; Travis Cranmer, St. Clair Secondary School; Katie Schieck, Northern Collegiate Institute and Vocational School and Heather McGregor, Sarnia Collegiate Institute and Technical School were recipients of the Tony Stranak Conservation Scholarships. These students each received a \$200 award.

The Conservation Scholarship program rewards graduating high school students continuing their post secondary studies in a conservation related field based on their academic achievement and their demonstrated interest and involvement with the environment. In total, \$2,800 was awarded across the St. Clair region this year.

The scholarships are made possible through trust funds established by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation and its donors.

EcoAction Grant Improves Environment

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority used funds received through the EcoAction Community Funding Program, a program of Environment Canada, to enhance shorelines in Strathroy. Trees, shrubs and wetland plants were planted to improve habitat and to help reduce erosion and sedimentation in the watercourse.



Muriel Andreae, Biologist with the SCRCA demonstrates how to properly plant a shrub to students participating in the Strathroy Community Clean-up Day.

"The planting took place this spring as part of our annual Strathroy Community Clean Up and Planting Day," Muriel Andreae, Biologist for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority said.

In total, 730 trees, shrubs and wetland plants were planted by volunteers and the Conservation Authority. "Community Involvement is a key part of this program," Andreae explained. "By involving the community, we all win - school children and other community members demonstrate they can make a difference and take ownership of the restoration program and the watershed takes another step to being a healthier place."

Outdoor Education Centre Renovated

Renovations are complete to the outdoor education classroom at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area. The renovations were funded by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation.

The education centre was constructed in 1980. There has been no major renovation of the building since that time. In order to meet the needs of the visitors (students, campers and day users) renovations were necessary. Key elements of the renovation included the creation of office space and storage as well as new flooring and electrical upgrades.



Next Conservation Authority
Board Meeting
Thursday, September 20, 2007
1:00 pm.
Administration Office

St. Clair Region Conservation Authority

205 Mill Pond Cr.
Strathroy, ON, N7G 3P9
519 245-3710, 519 245-3348 FAX
E-Mail: stclair@scrca.on.ca
Website: www.scrca.on.ca

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