

Conservation Update

August 2008



Fire at Henderson Campground

It was with great sadness on July 28th that we here at St. Clair Region Conservation Authority learned of the tragedy in our seasonal camping community at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area. Lambton OPP continue to investigate the death of Brian Wiebe and his dog in a trailer fire. Sincere thanks are expressed for the professional and timely assistance of Lambton OPP and the Petrolia North Enniskillen Township Fire Department who responded around 3 a.m. after neighbouring campers spotted the blaze and called 911. The fast action of the neighbours, and the expert response by the fire department kept the tragedy from being even worse. Our thanks are also extended to Victim Services who were on site to help those affected by this incident. Our condolences are respectfully extended to the family and friends of Mr. Wiebe.

Species at Risk in Action

The Conservation Authority has been awarded \$235,625 by the Habitat Stewardship Program of the Federal Government to carry out habitat improvement and community awareness and outreach in the Sydenham River Watershed. A portion of these funds are available to farmers to help implement stewardship projects.

"As we continue to help landowners adopt stewardship projects, such as fencing livestock from watercourses and riparian buffers, and educate residents of the watershed, we hope to build upon the already strong stewardship ethic," explains Brian McDougall, Director of Watershed Services for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. "Recognizing the significant contributions by farmers and helping them with financial incentives is the best way to have long term support for the maintenance and improvement of habitat along watercourses in the Sydenham River basin."



Awarding Scholarships

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.

Phillip Grover from North Lambton Secondary School and Craig Schritt from Strathroy District Collegiate Institute were



selected as the recipients of the 2008 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 individuals received the Tony Stranak Conservation Scholarships this year: Stacey Broad, Lambton Kent Composite School; Amy Kuenzig, St. Patrick's High School; Susan McCormick, Lambton Central Collegiate and Vocational Institute; and Stefan Ivanski, Strathroy District Collegiate Institute. These students each received a \$200 award.

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

Habitat Gets A Boost

The establishment of almost 1,000 acres of habitat was one of the targets for the delisting of the St. Clair River as an area of concern (AOC).



The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority received \$37,000 from the Ontario Great Lake Renewal Foundation which will be used to plant 12,000 trees and provided maintenance for 15,000 trees planted earlier. The maintenance of trees involves taking care of them for five years until they reach a point where they can survive on their own.

Landowners across the region have assisted the Authority in planting over 2.6 million trees in the St. Clair Region since 1980.



Watershed Week with the Museum Strathroy-Caradoc

This summer, the museum teamed up with SCRCa to celebrate "Watershed Week". From dip nets to environmental models, the children got their hands wet and soaked up some watershed lessons. "It's great to have the Conservation Authority come help with the program" said Museum curator Andrew Meyer, "after all they are the watershed experts".

Working together is not new to the two organizations. One great example of this can be seen in the Natural Heritage of the Sydenham River exhibit housed at the museum. The interactive display features two aquariums highlighting native fish species of the river, species at risk, and aquatic bugs. Another engaging project was the creation of a virtual exhibition on the history of the Sydenham River watershed. This informative and fun, website can be found at www.SydenhamDiscovery.ca.



Additional Funds for City Waterfront

Work will begin this fall at Mission Park thanks to a grant received by the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority. The project, intended to address shoreline erosion safety issues and to reduce sediment from entering the river, will provide shoreline protection for the development of the remainder of Mission Park. The City of Sarnia plans to include a riverside trail, parkland areas and parking which will provide greater recreation and tourism opportunities to the already popular Sarnia Bay shoreline.

The Great Lakes Renewal Foundation was instrumental in obtaining \$25,000 from the Imperial Foundation as well as contributing \$22,000 for a total of \$47,000 in grants toward the first phase of shore protection rehabilitation at Mission Park. The remaining portion of the estimated \$200,000 budget for the construction of Phase 1 will be shared by SCRCa and the City of Sarnia.



With half of summer yet to enjoy, much remains of this Summer of Fun:

at Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area

- Stupid Human / Stupid Pet Tricks & Staff vs. Camper Baseball Game (August 30)
- Year End Barbecue and Family Dance (September 20)

at Warwick Conservation Area

- Breakfast - Rubber Ducky Race - Bingo & The AI Hawking Fishing Derby (August 30)

at A.W. Campbell Conservation Area

- Bagel Breakfast (August 30)
- Children's Bingo Extravaganza (August 31)

Next Conservation Authority Board Meeting

Thursday, September 18, 2008, 1:00 pm.
Administration Office

St. Clair Region Conservation Authority

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