

Conservation Update



May, 2008

New Provincial Grants for Species at Risk

The province has awarded the Conservation Authority \$41,000 to undertake two projects which will improve our knowledge about species at risk in the St. Clair region, inform the public about funding opportunities and provide funds to implement land stewardship projects.

RBC Open Gates

We are pleased to join the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) in their support of environmental sustainability. Through support from RBC, the public is being offered free admission to all Conservation Areas in the Province on Sunday June 8th. This is an excellent opportunity for the public to enjoy our natural areas and to discover the excellent recreation facilities which are available.

8,000 Trees Planted at Dow Wetlands

Work at the Dow Wetlands continued as 8,000 trees were planted on the north side of the property. These trees will provide a buffer for the wetland from the traffic that runs along LaSalle Line. This project was one of several tree planting projects which were completed across the region this spring. In total 60,000 trees were planted.



Sydenham River Canoe Race

The Sydenham River Canoe Race was a great success this year with 162 people in 90 canoes and kayaks participating. Thanks to the generous participants, a record \$3,200 was raised for Outdoor Education. The race, which was held on April 20, included nine classes ranging from the very competitive 19 km expert class to the relaxing downstream 8 km recreation class. The fastest 19 km time was 1 hour 25 minutes by Dave Johnston and Keir Johnston. Jeff Agar and Steve Arnold from St. Clair Township not only won the award for most money raised, but also the 8 km VIP race.



On your mark, get set, go! A wild start to the recreation class at the 35th annual Sydenham River Canoe Race. A record \$3,200 was raised for Outdoor Education.

New Website Launched

Conservation Ontario has launched a new website to help you find Conservation Areas across the province. In their introduction they write:

"Close to home and across the province, Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities own and protect over 135,000 hectares (350,000 acres) of natural lands and offer more than 250 Conservation Areas for you to explore and enjoy. These Conservation Areas offer a wide range of natural experiences. If you're looking for a place where you can appreciate nature, get some exercise and learn about our environment, there's an adventure waiting for you at a nearby conservation area!"

check this site out at www.ontarioconservationareas.ca

Memorial Forest Dedication

The Denning Bros. Funeral Home held their annual dedication in Strathroy on May 25. About 300 people attended the ceremony which commemorated the trees which were planted as part of the Conservation Foundation's Memorial Forest Program. The Denning Bros. joined the program in 1997. Since that time 1,483 trees have been dedicated in the Strathroy-Caradoc community through donations received from the funeral home.



Forest for Life

On May 29, Ron Thayer joined the Conservation Authority in a presentation to introduce the *Forests for Life* Program to the community. This unique program was first developed by Ron in Haldimand Township to naturalize urban and rural areas. Forests for Life is an educational project and a hands on community greening initiative to bring students, teachers, conservation groups, the developmentally and mentally challenged and private nurseries together to grow native trees from seed for community planting projects.

In working with the community we can share information, resources and workload in an innovative way to increase environmental stewardship in our watershed. Lambton College, Canadian Mental Health, Boys Scouts Canada, Lambton Wildlife Inc, a local woodlot owner and the Ministry of Natural Resources attended the meeting. St. Clair High School, Natural Heritage Committee (Sarnia) and Community Living have also expressed interest in the program. We look forward to building great partnerships with interested community members and groups. For more information on this program contact Kim Gledhill at 519 882-2399 or Tim Payne at 519 245-3710 ext. 24

Conservation Areas Receive Face Lift

- Work is underway on a new visitor centre for the Warwick Conservation Area. The centre will provide a focal point for the very active camper programs that take place over the season. Funds to construct the centre have been donated by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation.
- In order to meet the growing demand for campsites, 13 new sites were established at the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area; 9 new sites at the Warwick Conservation Area; and services were upgraded to 20 sites at the L. C. Henderson Conservation Area.
- The visitor centre and pool washrooms at the A. W. Campbell Conservation Area were renovated
- 476 serviced campsites at 3 regional campgrounds

Volunteers Clean Parks and Plant Trees for Earth Day

Students from six Strathroy schools scoured the parks in Strathroy, cleaning up garbage and planting trees and shrubs. About 250 volunteers took part in this annual event. Strathroy-Caradoc staff, several businesses and organizations participated with the project which was organized by the Conservation Authority and Fanshawe College. Local businesses supplied funds to purchase trees and Langs Bus Lines donated a bus to help transport students to and from the parks. The Strathroy Lion's Club looked after refreshments. Certificates of appreciation were presented to the schools by Strathroy-Caradoc Mayor Mel Veale.



**Next Conservation Authority
Board Meeting
Thursday, June 12, 2008, 1:00 pm.
Administration Office**

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