



The turnout was good for the "fat bike" demo day.

### Fat Bike Demo Day at Wildwood CA

Wildwood Staff teamed up with Totally Spoke'd on a Fat Bike Demo day held at the Conservation Area on February 20. More than 60 riders were on hand to try out the 13 bikes made available by Totally Spoke'd, a local bike shop in Stratford. Fat bikes have been around for a while, but have grown in popularity over the last few years. Fat biking is off-road bicycling with over-sized tires and larger rims so you can ride on soft, unstable ground such as snow or mud. The bikes turn heads of those that they pass by and turn adults into children after a short ride. They are the monster trucks of the mountain bike sport.

Staff spent time grooming snow covered trails in the days leading up to the event with a groomer towed behind a snowmobile. The

groomer was manufactured by and borrowed from the Woodstock Cycling Club who have just started grooming the trails in "The Pines" at Pittock CA. Unfortunately, the warm weather the night before and on the day of the event melted most of the snow, but that didn't discourage people from trying the bikes out and all that did come back with big smiles.

Fat bikes can extend the season for the mountain bike enthusiast to almost a year round sport. Often bikers put their bikes away at the hint of the first snow fall. Wildwood staff are closely watching the growth of this new sport and looking at options for the future to provide users with a potential four season biking option.

Contact: Paul Switzer, Superintendent, Wildwood Conservation Area

### Stream of Dreams on the move!

With spring around the corner, Community Education and Community Partnerships staff are diving back into the Stream of Dreams program. This time, they're going to a school named for a nearby stream: Oxbow Public School.

Through this program, every student will learn the value of taking care of their local streams and how they can play a role in protecting fish habitat. Each student will also paint a wooden fish that will be part of a huge mural on the school yard fence. This colourful mural will be a reminder to students and the local community that this school cares about their environment and so should everyone else.

Contact: Julie Welker, Community Partnership Specialist



Cyclists enjoyed testing out the fat bikes on the groomed trail.

### Promoting LID at the Municipal Level

A survey conducted by the UTRCA of local municipalities, consultants and developers identified several technical, physical and institutional barriers that hinder the implementation of low impact development (LID). LID is a stormwater management approach that manages runoff close to its source through retention, infiltration and filtration. In order to begin overcoming these barriers, UTRCA staff have been meeting with municipalities to talk with planning, engineering and public works staff about LID. They address common concerns about LID and discuss opportunities for each municipality to implement LID and include it in their planning and approvals process.

UTRCA will host a symposium on April 6 targeted to municipalities to help motivate the adoption of LID practices throughout the watershed.

Contact: Alison Regehr, Conservation Services Technician



With Fanshawe Dam and Reservoir as the backdrop, Geoff Coulson talked about the science of predicting flash floods.

### *Flood Coordinator's Meeting*

Flood control staff held a meeting for municipal flood coordinators, focusing on the UTRCA's flood contingency plan. Presentations included flood management in Ontario, the UTRCA flood control program, both structural and non-structural methods, and communications during a flood. Staff reviewed types of flood bulletins, and looked at each agency's role in the event of a flood. Geoff Coulson, Warning Preparedness Meteorologist with Environment and Climate Change Canada, gave a guest presentation on the state of the science of flash flood prediction.

*Contact: Mark Helsten, Senior Water Resources Engineer*



Close to 30 flood coordinators from watershed municipalities and counties, as well as emergency services personnel, attended the meeting.

### *Earth Day London moves to St. Julien Park*

Londoners are invited to join us on Sunday, April 24, from 11 am to 3 pm, for the 23rd annual Earth Day London. This year's Earth Day will take place at St. Julien Park, which is a new location for this event.

The event focuses on planting native trees and wildlife shrubs in the City of London. It is made possible through the generous support of the City of London, Dillon Consulting, Middlesex Stewardship Council, John Zubick Limited, and many community volunteers.

St. Julien Park is located just north of the Thames River, east of St. Julien Street and west of Highbury Avenue North. Parking is available along side streets.

*Contact: Steve Sauder, Marketing Specialist*

### *On the Agenda*

The next UTRCA Board of Directors meeting will be March 22, 2016. Agendas and approved board meeting minutes are posted at [www.thamesriver.on.ca](http://www.thamesriver.on.ca); click on "Publications."

- Health and Safety Training
- Fanshawe Pioneer Village Report
- Use of Capital Maintenance Reserve
- Province of Ontario Grant Funding Agreement Approval
- Administration and Enforcement – Section 28
- Springbank Dam Update
- CA Unit Seasonal Staff Orientation

*Contact: Susan Shivas, Executive Assistant*



[www.thamesriver.on.ca](http://www.thamesriver.on.ca)

519-451-2800

Twitter @UTRCMarketing

Find us on Facebook!