

Sifton Bog Environmentally Significant Area Conservation Master Plan 2009 - 2019

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- Dan Jones (Supervisor)
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Executive Summary

Significance

Sifton Bog Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) is a 50-hectare site containing one of the most southerly peat bogs in Canada. Upland forests, both young and mature, soft maple swamps, and shrub thickets surround the bog. Most of the ESA is owned by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) and the City of London, who share in its management. Small portions of the ESA are owned by private landowners. The site is now entirely surrounded by urban development and faces many resource management challenges. Its location in the City of London provides educational and passive recreational opportunities.

Process

The Sifton Bog ESA Conservation Master Plan 2009 - 2019 has been completed collaboratively by the City of London, the UTRCA and interested community organizations and individuals. At a community meeting in September of 2006, about 100 people gave input on issues, concerns and opportunities for the Sifton Bog ESA. From this meeting, a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) was formed. The LAC met five times to provide input at various stages of the Plan's development - from visions, goals and objectives to final management recommendations.



Photo: Stan Caveney

Results

The essential tasks for conservation management are to:

- define measurable ecological restoration targets;
- identify appropriate methods;
- clearly articulate the goals of restoration to the public and policy makers to avoid misinterpretations of intent; and
- get on with the work.

The Local Advisory Committee (LAC), City of London and UTRCA developed the following mission statement:

The primary mission is to conserve the ecological health and uniqueness of Sifton Bog Environmentally Significant Area. A second priority is the provision of compatible educational and recreational opportunities.

Three guiding principles were endorsed:

- Conserve ecological health for the long term
- Promote awareness of unique natural features
- Work with the community to coordinate awareness, education, and appreciation efforts

Specific criteria to be factored into all decision-making processes were developed. Development of the Conservation Master Plan resulted in 11 objectives and 53 recommendations that focus on the key issues of concern for maintaining the ecosystem health and ecological integrity of the Sifton Bog ESA.

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