



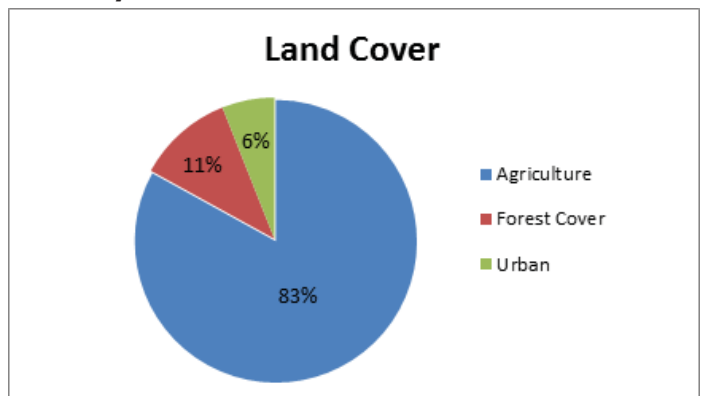
Community members promoting the protection and improvement of the Medway Creek watershed.

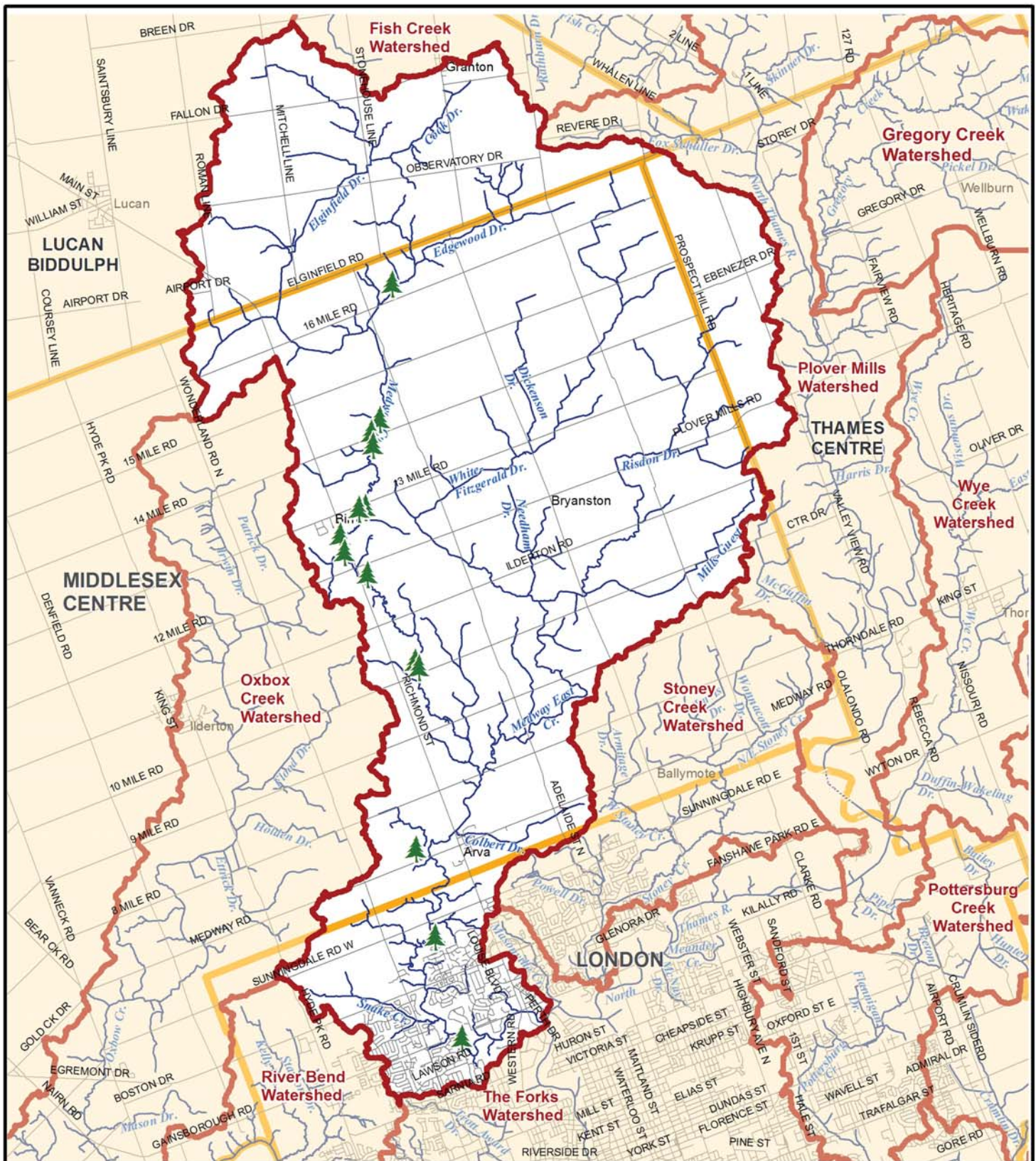


The Friends of Medway Creek came together in 2008, with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA), to help implement restoration activities and environmental initiatives that improve the health of the Medway Creek watershed.

The Friends of Medway Creek collaborate with various landowners, municipalities, and other agencies to identify potential restoration activities or sites and engage the broader Medway Creek community in best management practices.

Medway Watershed Land Use








Friends of Medway Creek Tree Planting Sites

Reference: Watercourse, data interpreted and created from 2010 imagery, UTRCA.
Basemapping provided by Land Information Ontario.



3 1.5 0 3 km

Legend

-  Tree Planting Sites
-  Watershed Boundary
-  Municipal Boundary



Upcoming Events

Join us at our Community Day event on Saturday, May 6, for tree planting, planting a Milkweed Garden for monarch butterflies and discover what fish live in the creek through an electrofishing demonstration. You'll find us just south of Sunningdale Road (between Wonderland Road and Richmond Street), along the paved pathway in the Medway Valley Heritage Forest Environmentally Significant Area (ESA). For more information, contact Julie Welker at welkerj@thamesriver.on.ca.

Oh, the Things We've Done!

Since the inception of the Friends of Medway Creek, we've accomplished more than we expected! Here are some highlights:

- More than 10,000 native trees and shrubs planted on land along Medway Creek and in retired agricultural fields
- 4,000 students planted those trees and shrubs
- More than 10 hectares of land returned to its natural state
- 9 river stone riffles installed in the creek (riffles increase flow of water and nutrients, help prevent sediment build up, and create habitat for benthic invertebrates that are food for fish)
- Helped release over 40,000 Brown Trout fingerlings (baby fish)
- Removed 1 concrete barrier that was impeding fish movement in the creek
- Assisted with the removal of invasive European Buckthorn shrubs from Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA

Oh, the Places We'll Go!

"Medway Decides" – We Won!

"Medway Decides" is one of London City Council's Neighbourhood Decision Making Pilot Projects. Residents proposed ideas and then voted on how to spend a portion of the municipal budget in their neighbourhoods. One of the three projects selected by the Medway community is "Nature in Medway - Benches and Signage," a project submitted by the Friends of Medway Creek! Four interpretive signs and three benches will be installed along the trails in the Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA, so people can take a break and enjoy the sights, sounds and scents of nature. Connecting people to nature helps reduce stressors such as depression and strengthens the community.



In addition to the benches and interpretive signs, the Friends of Medway Creek continue to work with landowners to enhance their lands to further benefit habitat and water quality.



Seasons in the Medway Valley – City

During the autumn, as in all seasons, I have a good feeling for the valley of the Medway, a land that I have been living on or near for some twenty-two years. From sunrise to sunset and from cloudy evening to moonlit night, new experiences have awaited me on the trails that bend their way over the goldenrod fields and through the colourful stands of beech, maple and ash.

Sometimes the old trees are whispering and creaking in the wind, trying almost to talk to any human wanderer that passes near. Others stand silently robed in crimson, yellow and orange, awaiting the stark reality of winter, while the Indian summer sun playfully splashes rays of brightness through the leafy canopy onto the woodland floor. Close by, the creek babbles over some sudden fall, a blue jay cackles and, overhead, almost in the clouds, a hawk soars with the sun. Lush wild grapes that emit a sour purple juice, and shiny high bush cranberries, are hanging in anticipation of animal harvesters or a cold day that will shrivel them into wild raisins. Then, with little warning, dark clouds roll under the sun and spray the earth with blistery showers.

This land has a character of its own; a land that lives and breathes with the sounds of life and the evidence of creation. See you in the woods.

- Steven Winder, 1978



I love where I live - Country

I often tell people, "I love where I live." And there are many reasons why I make that statement. Located a stone's throw from London, I have great neighbours, space to breath, and the great outdoors as my playground. I live on a quiet road lined with farm fields and old maple trees that stand in front of houses dotting the concession. There is bush, birds and wildlife in every season, and at the centre of it all is Medway Creek.

The creek is part of my daily life. I drive over it, ski to it, snow shoe on it and in the spring, when the water is high, canoe on it. It is where I can connect to nature without having to drive 5 hours north. The creek is where, if I am quiet (and lucky), I may see foxes, beavers, turtles, ducks or herons. It is where I go after a rain to see how high and fast the water is. And in the summer, when the creek dries to a trickle, I know it is time to start worrying about the water level in my well.

I love watching the creek change with every season. Spring is rushing water and flooded lowlands. In summer, the pace of the creek is sluggish and laidback. Fall is full out colour, reflecting the many trees that line the creek bank. My personal favourite "creek season" is winter, when it's cold and snowy and the water is so crystal clear you can see every rock on the bottom. If you follow the creek north from my house, there is a spot in the bush I call my "happy place." This is where I go in the winter to restore my sense of well-being and balance. It is very still and very quiet. The only sounds that break the quiet are the wind in the trees and the music of the creek as it dances over the rocks. I could stand here for hours watching and listening to the water just breathing, all the while thinking, "I love where I live."

- Sandra Dixon



Medway Calendars* for great cause!

A message from Wendy Hansuld, the creator of these calendars:

I still walk a stretch of the creek most days, and never without my camera. As I'm fond of telling a colleague, you can't see the wildlife if you don't go for a walk, and you can't get a shot of it if you don't have your camera with you, ready to shoot.

I keep hearing that taking great shots takes a lot of patience, and I don't particularly agree. But then, I'm not a professional photographer, just an opportunist. Every time I go out, the Medway offers up something priceless – pewees, woodpeckers, hawks, osprey, fish, mink, muskrat, ducks, deer, racoons ... the list is endless.

I admit the one shot I kept hoping to catch was the heron in flight. They've taunted me since I started my walks – always taking off just as I arrived, or flying in front of the sun, preventing the shot I really wanted. One precious afternoon off work in September, I took time to linger along the creek and was rewarded with a heron who was happy to help with my quest. For almost an hour, I took shot after shot while it went fishing along several hundred metres of the creek, and was given several opportunities to take photos of it in flight. September's photo is my reward for never giving up – and having the camera ready.

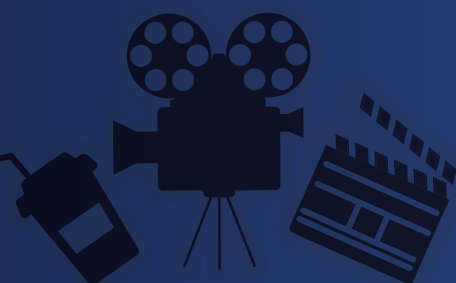
For those who asked: I don't identify what is in each of the photos, since I hope you will find out how rewarding it can be to explore the many resources that exist to help with species identification. Many of my pictures were taken simply to help me identify something on the computer later. There are books and websites to help identify everything - including dragonflies and wildflowers in Ontario - by colour. Cornell Ornithology is a wonderful resource on all things related to birds, and can help the most novice birdwatcher easily identify even the age of an immature bald eagle. I can also say, it seems to be easier to remember what something is afterwards if you've had to look it up.

***Proceeds from calendar sales go to the Friends of Medway Creek to assist in their projects to enhance the creek's environmental health.**



Medway Moments Film

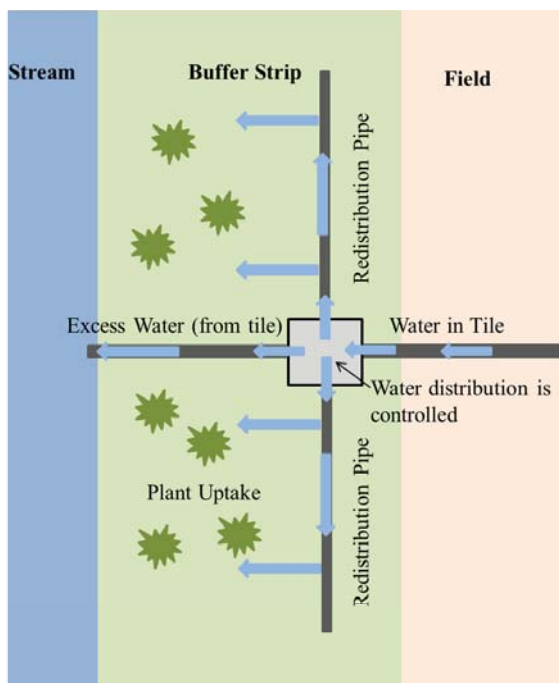
Travel along Medway Creek with filmmaker Phil McLeod in his latest film, "Medway Moments." Phil takes us through the seasons along Medway Creek and introduces us to the people who are restoring the creek's health. YouTube Medway Moments and sit back and relax as you dive into the Medway Creek.



Other Programs and Projects

Natural Channel Design to Reduce Phosphorus in Medway Creek

A section of Medway Creek was restored by installing rock barriers to narrow the stream channel and help recreate more natural flow conditions. Last November, UTRCA staff completed a field study to assess the ability of this restored section of the creek to hold sediment and phosphorus. Overall, the channel appears to perform as designed, which indicates that stream restoration may be an effective Best Management Practice to reduce sediment and phosphorus transport in the Thames River.



Field Needed for Saturated Buffer Strip Project

The UTRCA is looking for a landowner interested in installing a saturated buffer strip, which is a new agricultural Best Management Practice to reduce field nutrient losses. Rather than water discharging from a tile drain system directly into a stream or ditch, the water is diverted into a redistribution pipe that runs along a grass buffer strip, parallel to the stream or ditch. The buffer strip plants take up nutrients from the water before they reach the stream.

If you have a suitable field next to a stream or ditch, that has an existing buffer strip or can have one established, contact Brad Glasman (519-451-2800 x251, glasmanb@thamesriver.on.ca).

Monitoring Water Quality in Medway Creek

The UTRCA continues to monitor water quality in the Upper Medway Creek Subwatershed. This area, located roughly between the towns of Lucan and Granton, is part of a pilot study, along with five other subwatersheds across southwestern Ontario. The three-year study is assessing the effect of stewardship practices on local water quality. Funding is available for rural landowners to implement stewardship projects on their land. A high cost-share percentage is provided in hopes of a high uptake rate among landowners.



The creek's water quality is monitored to determine if changes in land practices can lead to measurable stream health improvements. Large hydrologic events are often high exporters of nutrients from watersheds, so the recent January snow-melt and rain events were closely monitored to determine the volume of water and the nutrient concentrations leaving the watershed. The study has a particular focus on phosphorus, which has a significant effect downstream on the health of the Great Lakes. The UTRCA also continues to organize monthly landowner meetings to discuss progress and to encourage adoption of Best Management Practices. 2017 marks the start of the third year for the project.

Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA (South), Conservation Master Plan – Phase 2

The Conservation Master Plan (CMP) Phase 1 for the ESA lands south of Fanshawe Park Road was developed through a two-year community consultation process. It provides the framework for ongoing adaptive ecological-management.

Phase 2 will begin with the formation of a Local Advisory Committee and a community meeting early in 2017. The Conservation Master Plan process is outlined below.

Phase 1

Community Engagement and Participation

Life Science Inventory and Evaluation

Boundary Delineation

**Application of Management Zones and
Review of Existing Trails**

Identification of Management Issues

Phase 2

Community Engagement and Participation

Goals, Objectives and Recommendations

**Ecological Protection, Enhancement
and Restoration**

Trail Planning and Design Process

Priorities for Implementation

Final Conservation

Master Plan



London
CANADA

For details, contact

Linda McDougall, Ecologist,
City of London
519-661-2500 x 6494
lmcdouga@london.ca

Want to get involved?

Please contact Julie Welker, Community Partnership Specialist (welkerj@thamesriver.on.ca, 519-451-2800 x255) for information on any of the following:

- Joining the Friends of Medway Creek
- Receiving updates on events and projects
- Planting native trees and shrubs on your property
- Volunteering at events
- In-stream improvements on your property
- Involving your property in conservation research
- Projects to conserve soil health and improve water quality

