

Buffers Protect The Environment

By Improving Water Quality

The Friends of Medway Creek are looking for landowners in the Medway Creek watershed who would like to plant buffers along their creek to reduce erosion and runoff. Project funding may be available!



FRIENDS OF
MEDWAY
CREEK

UPPER THAMES RIVER
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



Buffers Protect The Environment

The Friends of Medway Creek are keen to help landowners plant buffers, particularly along the northern section of the creek and drains. The Friends can pursue funding to either assist with or pay 100% of a native tree/shrub/grass planting project.

Projects must meet certain criteria, including:

- Involving the community (e.g., having local students plant the trees)
- Landowner contributes either in-kind (ie. your time) or monetary support
- Building and installing bird nest boxes to promote buffer habitation.

All projects are planned and implemented with the assistance of the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

For more Information

If you or someone you know is interested, we want to hear from you! Please contact:

Julie Welker, Community Partnership Specialist

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

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www.thamesriver.on.ca

www.cleanwaterprogram.ca

The Big Picture



In Ontario, the Great Lakes ultimately feel the impact of soil erosion on your farm.



*Sediment plume from
Thames River*

*Poor soil management practices have
adversely affected water quality.*

Benefits C



Stable Streambanks, Silt-free Streams

Roots from grasses, shrubs and trees prevent streambanks from eroding and keep silt from going into the stream. Stable streambanks and reduced silt buildup keep the stream healthier, and save maintenance costs.



Soak it up!

An effective buffer slows down surface runoff, so that it can soak into the ground rather than flowing into the creek or drain, and possibly causing flooding and erosion. The additional moisture in the ground then gradually feeds into the drain, helping to maintain flows.

Of Buffers



Nitrates be gone!

Good soil structure and plant root channels in the buffer strip help runoff soak into the ground. Once in the soil, organisms there remove nitrate from the water.



Putting Buffer Plants to Work

Nitrate and phosphorous are easily carried by runoff over or through the soil. Deep-rooted grasses will take up these soluble contaminants. Studies have shown that buffer vegetation and soil microbes can remove over 90% of nitrogen from shallow groundwater as it moves through the buffer zone, and up to 85% of phosphorous from surface water.



Great place to live!

Streambeds that are free from silt buildup provide a healthy place where fish can thrive. A diverse mix of aquatic life will consume nutrients and form the basis of the food web. A healthy aquatic community also helps to improve water quality.



Stop that Sediment!

Dense, stiff grasses block the flow of sediment through the buffer strip. Phosphorous particles attached to the sediment are trapped in the buffer and kept out of the stream. This filtering ability can also stop bacteria that may be carried by overland flow from adjacent fields towards the watercourse.

The Friends of Medway Creek

In 2007, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority published the 2007 Upper Thames River Watershed Report Cards where it assessed and gave a letter grade to surface water quality and forest conditions in every watershed.

The Watershed Report Cards also provide a summary of watershed features and an action plan for each.

The Medway Creek was given a letter grade of 'C' for surface water quality and 'D' for forest conditions. As a result Medway Creek was selected as a priority area for development of a Community Based Watershed Strategy. Since that time, the Friends of Medway Creek was created.

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

The mission statement of the committee is:

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

To read more about the Medway Creek and Strategy for improvement, please go to
http://www.thamesriver.on.ca/Watershed_Projects/Medway/MedwayCBES-report.pdf
http://www.thamesriver.on.ca/Watershed_Report_Cards/Watershed_Report_Cards-2007.htm

Join Us!

The Friends of Medway Creek are eager to recruit some additional committee members, particularly from the northern sections of the creek and area. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact the UTRCA.



THE MEDWAY CREEK WATERSHED

Accomplishments of the Friends to date (2008-2010):

- Created the Medway Creek Community-based Enhancement Strategy
- Planted nearly 3,500 trees and shrubs
- Planted 1,500 aquatic plants
- Involved over 1,000 students
- Increased tree cover on 2 ha of land
- Removed a barrier

Partners and Sponsors (past and present)

- Township of Middlesex Centre
- Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
- Many landowners and interested citizens
- Local schools
- Environment Canada's EcoAction Funding Program
- Ontario Ministry of Environment
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- London Community Foundation
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

The Medway Creek watershed encompasses approximately 205 square kilometers. Of this total, 133 sq km are within Middlesex Centre, and 40 sq km are in Lucan-Biddulph and the last 20 sq km is in the City of London.

Community Getting Involved!



Local students learn about water quality in the Medway Creek by examining water insects (benthic invertebrates)

Local students lend a hand to help improve the Medway Creek



Landowners find out how to help improve the health of the Medway Creek