



MAITLAND MUSINGS

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LOWER MAITLAND STEWARDSHIP GROUP (LSMG)

“How do you measure up?” - Rural Landowner Stewardship Guide Workshop

Are you interested in learning about options for improving and protecting the natural environment on your property? If so, you'll also be interested in attending this upcoming workshop, where you'll have an opportunity to work through the brand new

“Rural Landowner Stewardship Guide”.



The Stewardship Guide has been patterned after the very successful Environmental Farm Plan (EFP),

but targets landowners who don't have a farm business registration number and thus don't qualify to participate in the EFP.

The Rural Landowner Stewardship Guide workshop will lead you through self assessment of a wide variety of environmental topics for your property, including woodlots and other natural areas, wildlife, septic systems, well safety, landscaping, construction activities, chemical & fuel storage, property access, etc. By attending the workshop and

working through the guide you'll discover ideas for improving conditions on your property and learn about funding or assistance programs you may be able to access. The guide also references many sources of information that can help you become a better steward on your property.

There is no cost for this workshop. It will run from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (registration 9:30 to 10:00 a.m.) on **Saturday September 29, 2007** at the Ontario Government (OMAF & OMNR) Building at 100 Don Street in Clinton. A lunch and beverages will be provided.

Participants in the workshop will receive:

- a copy of the Rural Landowner Stewardship Guide;
- a certificate for one large stock tree for planting on your property in the spring of 2008;
- Lunch, and, best of all;
- the chance to meet with other property owners from



Amongst other benefits, participants of this workshop will receive a certificate for one large stock tree to be planted on your property in Spring, 2008.

your area, learn about a variety of environmental topics and start development of an action plan for your property!

We ask that you pre register by *Monday, September 24th* so we can plan for the meal. To register, contact Steve Bowers at 519-482-3661.

Why not attend and bring a friend or neighbour?

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Special points of interest:

- Take advantage of various funding opportunities to improve the health of your property
- Be involved! Learn about how you can engage with fellow property owners and stakeholders with similar environmental protection interests.

'Species at Risk' - An Overview

By Steve Bowers



Of the over 500 species at risk in Canada, 181 of them are in Ontario.

Our lifelong health and quality of life depend on biodiversity – a rich diversity of wild plants, animals and habitats. We are fortunate to live in a province of rich biodiversity, but more species become endangered each year as a result of ever-increasing human activities. More than 170 of Ontario's wild species are at risk – that's over one-third of all of the species at risk in Canada.

'Species at Risk' can be defined as any plant or animal threatened by, or vulnerable to, extinction. Depending on the status of the species, they can be given a range of designations including Extinct, Extirpated, Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern.

Since 2000, about \$2 million has been invested each year in the provincial Species at Risk Program. With this funding, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is providing protection for species at risk and coordinating recovery and research projects with numerous partners. For anyone who is interested there are opportunities to become directly involved in environmental

conservation efforts including species recovery.

MNR works with many partners - government agencies, non-government organizations and interested individuals at local, provincial and national levels to protect and recover species at risk. In 2005 the Ontario government announced Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy as part of a global effort to protect biodiversity and ensure sustainable use of biological resources. The

"The most serious danger to wildlife may arise from the 'snowball' effect of several threats, such as the loss of wild spaces, environmental pollution, and climate change."

strategy recommends actions by government, non-government and private sector organizations to protect and preserve our natural heritage, including species at risk.

In Canada, more than 500 wild animal and plant species are considered "at risk" according to the Committee on the Status of Endangered Species in Canada (COSEWIC), with close to 40% of these species are found in Ontario. Some urban and rural activities, such as expanding residential development, pose significant threats to Ontario's wildlife. Natural habitats that are under the most intense pressure are forests, grasslands, wetlands, and the Great Lakes and their watersheds. The

Carolinian ecozone in south-western Ontario is perhaps the most wildlife-rich area in the Country; yet it is also home to about one-third of the nation's Species at Risk.

Canada's species at risk include plants such as Eastern Prairie Fringed-orchid, Few-flowered Club-rush, Engelmann's Quillwort, American Ginseng, Western Silvery Aster, and a variety of animals including the Barn Owl, Wood Turtle, Jefferson Salamander, American Badger. Ontario is home to the highest percentage of Species at Risk among the regions, followed closely by British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.

Loss of habitat is one of the most significant causes of environmental pressure on wildlife. Ontario has the most concentrated human population in Canada. In southern Ontario where most of the people live, there is significant pressure on natural habitats. In some areas, this pressure has displaced many wild plants and animals.

Like people, wildlife are subject to a variety of threats throughout their life cycle. Today, most stressors for wildlife are directly related to human activities, whether in urban, suburban or rural areas. The most serious danger to wildlife may arise from the "snowball" impact of several threats, such as the loss of wild spaces, environmental pollution, and climate change. The good news is that Southern Ontarian's

can play a significant role in the preservation and rehabilitation of natural habitats. Everyone can make an effort to learn how to better co-exist with wildlife, and help to reverse the tragic decline of wild populations. It is about *preserving, connecting and revitalizing* wildlife habitat.

In Ontario, private citizen participation in conservation and recovery efforts will be aided by the "Species at Risk Stewardship Fund", which is linked to the recently passed Endangered Species Act, 2007. This



Species at Risk in this area include both animal and plant wildlife.

stewardship-first approach to species protection will support greater public involvement in a variety of initiatives aimed at reversing the rate of species decline in Ontario. The Species at Risk Stewardship Fund is open to landowners, farmers, Aboriginal peoples, academic institutions, industries, conservation organizations and others who undertake eligible protection and recovery activities. The deadline to apply for funds in 2007 is **August 20**.

This initiative is important as it will encourage greater public involvement by em-

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Cleaning Up the River Valley

Connect with your community and with people across Canada who care about the environment!

TD Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-Up is a yearly event that the Lower Maitland Stewardship Group (LMSG) is

again participating in. Please consider coming out to help!

Saturday, September 16th, 2007 at 9 am, we will be gathering outside the CPR Station at the Harbour Beach in Goderich to remove gar-

bage from the mouth of the river east along the valley corridor.

To find out more, go to: www.vanaqua.org/cleanup and follow the links to register. Or, contact **Joyce Wilson** at (519) 524-8394 ext3.



Landowners and stakeholders of the Lower Maitland River Valley are invited to help clean up the valley.

Funding Opportunities for Landowners & Organizations in the Lower Maitland Area

Huron Clean Water Project

The Huron Clean Water Project provides financial and technical assistance to improve and protect water quality on Huron County farms and rural properties. The project is funded by the County of Huron and delivered by the Ausable Bayfield (ABCA) and Maitland Valley (MVCA) Conservation Authorities. Funding assistance covers up to 50 % of the costs of eligible projects and ranges from \$500 to \$3,000, depending on the category. Eligible projects include Clean Water Diversion, Erosion Control Measures, Fragile Land Retirement, Livestock Fencing from Watercourses, Well-head Protection or De-

commissioning and Community Group Projects.



To apply for funding, farmers, rural landowners and community groups should call the MVCA (335-3557) or ABCA (235-2610).

Payment for Ecological Goods and Services (PEGS) Pilot Project

This project will offer additional payments for landowners willing to create enhanced buffers

adjacent to watercourses or wetlands. Successful applicants will receive payments over a five year period to help compensate them for retirement of their land. The principle behind this pilot project is supporting landowners who are willing to undertake projects on their land that benefit society as a whole. Funding is limited. For information landowners should contact the MVCA (335-3557) or ABCA (235-2610).

Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program (CFWIP)

CFWIP is an opportunity to participate in hands-on fish and wildlife management and conservation activities. You can de-

velop volunteer projects that will improve fish and wildlife in the province, and improve opportunities for outdoor recreation. CFWIP projects must benefit the resource, involve the public and benefit the general public.

Possible projects include:

spawning bed creation; habitat restoration; wildlife census; streambank fencing and stabilization; fish culture and stocking; schoolyard renaturalization; building nesting platforms; developing educational trails; or reintroduction of lost species, such as wild turkeys or peregrine falcons. For information contact Steve Bowers at 482-3661 or steve.bowers@ontario.ca

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'Species at Risk' cont'd.... (from page 2)

powering individual landowners to be more involved in environmental stewardship this year and in future.

There are many things we can all do to help protect biodiversity and species

at risk. For general information on the Species at Risk Stewardship program and the Endangered Species Act, 2007 please refer to the program website at: www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/speciesatrisk/.

For questions regarding the SAR Stewardship Fund contact:

J.J. Beechie, Species at Risk Stewardship Outreach Advisor, Tel: (705) 755--5340, Email: j.j.beechie@ontario.ca

Also, feel free to contact your local Clinton MNR Area office at 519-482-3428 for more information.

Note: this article has been developed from information available through the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). Contact MNR for further details at: www.mnr.gov.on.ca

LOWER MAITLAND STEWARDSHIP GROUP (LMSG)

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We're on the web:
www.huronstewardship.on.ca

The Lower Maitland River Valley is a landscape worthy of protection. Surrounded by highly productive agricultural land, the valley is deeply incised and features an intact corridor of forest, numerous natural heritage features for fish and wildlife habitat, woodlands, limestone outcroppings, and many other features of interest. To date, the river valley has been relatively untouched by development.

The LMSG was formed in 1998 and consists of landowners, stakeholders, organization and agency representatives, and individuals interested in protecting and enhancing the valley and its natural features.

The group has prepared a strategy to outline its goals and to direct its activities to reflect our vision for the area, with a focus on valley protection, landowner's rights, and sustained stakeholder use.

If you have an interest in hearing more about these activities or the group, contact Steve Bowers, or attend our next meeting—Tuesday, October 2nd, 7 pm at the CPR Station at the Harbour Beach in Goderich.

Funding Opportunities (cont'd from page 3)

Ontario MNR / COA (Canada Ontario Agreement) Project

Funding is available for projects that support aquatic habitat enhancement. Possible projects could include wetland restoration or enhancement, creation or enhancement of riparian buffers and tree planting that reduces potential for soil erosion. For information contact Chris Hart at 519-482-3661 or chris.hart@ontario.ca.

Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)

Environmental Farm Plans are assessments voluntarily prepared by farm families to increase their environmental awareness in up to 23 different areas on their farm. Through the EFP local workshop process, farmers will highlight their farm's environmental strengths, identify areas of environmental concern, and set realistic action plans with time tables to improve environmental conditions. Significant funds are available in these environmental cost-share programs to assist in implementing projects. To inquire about this program, contact Lois Sinclair, Huron County OSCIA Workshop Leader and Program Representative at 519-357-3146.

Trees Ontario Foundation (TOF)

Trees Ontario Foundation works with local tree planting and delivery agencies to reduce landowner planting costs and enhance tree planting activities. A subsidy of 10 or 50 cents per seedling is available for tree planting projects that meet the TOF criteria. For more information check out their web site at <http://www.treesontario.on.ca/landowners/>.

Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)

MFTIP offers a reduction in property taxes to landowners of forest land who prepare a plan and agree to be good stewards of their property. To qualify, landowners must have 4 hectares (10 acres) of forested land, be a Canadian citizen or resident and have a managed forest plan approved by a Managed Forest Plan Approver. If you are already receiving a reduction on the property tax for your woodlot through the Farm Tax Incentive Program, you should not pursue this program. For more information on the MFTIP contact either

the Ontario Woodlot Association at 1-888-791-1103 or the Ontario Forestry Association at 1-800-387-0790.

Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP)

CLTIP offers a reduction in property taxes to landowners with provincially significant natural heritage features on their property. That could include Species at Risk habitat or a provincially significant ANSI (Area of Natural and Scientific Interest) or wetland. In all likelihood if one of these features is located on your property you have already been notified. For more information, visit the CLTIP web site at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/cltip.

Huron County Septic Reinspection Program

This project offers GPS mapping as well as information and awareness about the location, condition, operation and maintenance of your septic system. Participants can receive a grant for 50% of the cost for a septic system pump out (up to \$75). Call 519-482-5119 ext. 2303.

