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November 28, 2011

**Subject:** Canopies for Kids – School Shade Tree Planting Program

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) is pleased to continue our *Canopies for Kids* program. The goal of this program is to teach students through hands-on involvement, the benefits trees provide.

This science-based program is adapted for grades 1 to 8 and meets the Life Systems Strand of the Ontario curriculum. The program provides a deeper look at how trees improve biodiversity, water quality and air quality. Studies have shown that trees can reduce asthma rates related to poor air quality, contribute to increased physical activity, improve mood and promote psychological well being. Students will learn about the benefits of trees and forests and how they help improve our ecological, economic and social environment.

Schools selected to participate in *Canopies for Kids* will be engaged through interactive school assemblies provided by NPCA program staff. Staff will work with the selected schools to design a tree planting plan, including both large and small trees that will work with the existing features of your school playground. All trees will be native to Niagara and are selected for their tolerance of specific conditions. There is no cost to the participating schools and a maximum of 10 schools per year will be selected. Schools will be responsible for watering all planted trees until the end of the school year (June). After this time, trees will be watered by an NPCA hired contractor.

Schools that have less than 5% canopy cover in the playground area will be prioritized for funding. The program is expected to continue over a five year time-frame; unsuccessful schools will have an opportunity to reapply the following program years (subject to funding availability). Please review the information provided to determine your interest and eligibility. The deadline for application is January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and requires the support of the school principal. In addition, we would appreciate the support of custodial staff.

We are confident that this program will be of great benefit to your school and community. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barry Porter".

Barry Porter  
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority  
905-788-3135 ext. 257  
[bporter@npca.ca](mailto:bporter@npca.ca)





# Canopies for Kids

## Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Shade Tree Planting Program

*Canopies for Kids* is a shade and biodiversity tree planting initiative coordinated locally by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. The goal of the program is to engage Elementary school aged children in education and outreach activities through the planting of large and small trees in school playgrounds across the Niagara Peninsula.

### **Benefits of Trees**

Trees create a healthy environment for students. They provide shade for play areas and increase energy efficiency for school buildings. Studies have shown that exposing children to trees reduces asthma rates related to poor air quality, increases physical activity, improves mood and promotes psychological well being.

### **Engaging Children in Hands-on Learning**

Hands-on learning, through tree planting, can create lasting relations between children and the environment. Qualifying schools will receive interactive school assemblies / workshops provided by program staff. Schools will also receive planting plan consultation and site design incorporating both large and small tree species native to Niagara, tree installation (small trees will be planted by students, large trees by machine), and a maintenance / monitoring plan. Students will learn about the benefits of trees and forests and how they help our ecological, economic and social environment. The science-based presentations adapted for grades 1-8, (meeting the Life Systems Strand of the Ontario curriculum) will provide a deeper look at how trees improve biodiversity, water quality and air quality.

### **How to Get Involved**

Ten schools will be selected annually (2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 5 year program). Project approval will be based on an evaluation matrix with review by members of an established committee. Successful applicants will be contacted the second week of February, 2012. Site consultation will begin in early March; presentations will take place in early April. Planting will occur the 4th week of May.

Please submit completed *Canopies for Kids* Shade Tree Planting Program Application form by the January 27<sup>th</sup> 2012 deadline to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

# Canopies for Kids

## Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Shade Tree Planting Program

### Project Qualification Form – Deadline for Application, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### For Office Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Registered: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation Sent

Yes

No

How many trees over 5 metres (15 feet) tall are currently in your school's playground area?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you provide a secure area (away from recreation areas, etc) that can accommodate 10 large trees approximately (15 -25 ft tall) and 5-10 smaller trees (5-12 ft tall)?  Yes  No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently have an active green team, eco club, environmental club etc?  Yes  No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you provide watering after planting (late May) until the end of school in June?  Yes  No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate the incidence of vandalism on your schools property below (i.e.: playground, vegetation damage);

High (more than 5 incidents / year)  Moderate (less than 5)  Low (1 or less)

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the school property adjacent to any existing natural areas such as wetland, woodland, or streams?

Yes  No

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

This program has been discussed with the school custodian / maintenance staff  Yes  No

The school will be responsible for providing locates (Ontario One Call)  I agree

Send completed form to: **Barry Porter**, Restoration Program Assistant

Fax: 905-788-1121 Email: [bnporter@ncca.ca](mailto:bnporter@ncca.ca)

# Canopies for Kids

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) would like to thank you for your interest and commitment to improving Niagara's biodiversity, water quality and air quality through the Canopies for Kids Program. Selected participating schools will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NPCA. The following provides a brief description of the general requirements contained in our standard MOU.

## **Approved "Canopies for Kids" partners will agree to the following conditions:**

1. All documents relating to the Canopies for Kids program will be carefully read and distributed as appropriate.
2. All relevant notices regarding the Canopies for Kids program will be sent home with the students well in advance of all planned activities. Students are required to wear appropriate clothing for planting activities and will not be permitted to participate if not properly prepared. For example, open toed shoes, flip flops, sandals, untied shoes or shoes with heels are not appropriate footwear for tree planting. Planting will be a rain or shine event unless electrical storm activity is suspected.
3. Agree to water and care for trees from the time of planting until the end of the school year in June, 2012. Agree to monitor installed trees on a regular basis and report any problems to NPCA staff i.e. vandalism, dying trees etc.
4. It is the responsibility of the school to obtain locates (Ontario One Call) prior to tree installation.
5. Alterations to planting plan concepts and designs must be approved by the NPCA prior to installation.
6. Ensure that the NPCA is recognized on all promotional media for the Canopies for Kids Program.

## **The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority agrees to:**

1. Provide your school with all materials and supplies needed for your project.
2. Provide technical support/advice, design, summer-time watering, monitoring guidelines
3. Provide on-site design consultation
4. Provide fact sheets, teaching aids, and species lists
5. Recognize your school in promotional materials regarding the Canopies for Kids Program.

Both parties reserve the right to withdraw from the program if the above conditions cannot be met.