

Get Involved!

- If you have an area on your property where water accumulates faster than it drains, you have a natural opportunity for a wetland, and an immediate opportunity to help improve local water quality.
- If you do not have wetland areas on your property, they can be easily created. Wetlands provide the best way to improve local water quality and species diversity.
- You can make a difference in protecting the environment, and we would like to help you get started.



You May Qualify For Funding

Grants are available to landowners who live in qualifying areas of our watershed to implement projects which will help improve local water quality. Grant rates and ceilings may vary between watersheds.

Eligible Items*	Grant Rate	Grant Ceiling
Habitat restoration including buffer strips, wetlands and riparian habitat creation or protection.	Up to 75%	Up to \$10,000

* Technical advice and assistance is available to all watershed residents.

Program Guidelines

To qualify for current funding the following criteria must be met:

- Projects must be within the eligible area.
- Projects must demonstrate an improvement to local surface and/or groundwater quality.
- The landowner must demonstrate good land stewardship practices.
- The landowner must contribute financially to the project in some capacity.
- The landowner must complete a water quality improvement application and sign a project agreement form*.

How To Apply For Grants

- Obtain specific program information from the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority to determine if your project qualifies.
- Complete a Water Quality Improvement Application.
- A site visit from Authority staff will be necessary to determine eligibility.
- Projects that will result in the best benefits to water quality will be prioritized for funding.
- All proposals are subject to review by an established project committee.

* To acquire your water quality improvement application and project agreement form, please contact our local office at the address and / or number below.



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WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



“When one tugs at a single thing in nature,
he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”

- John Muir



DID YOU KNOW?

Wetlands are communities of plants and animals that depend on the presence of water and wet soil to survive. Wetlands are the most diverse and productive ecosystems in Ontario. They are home to over 600 species of birds, mammals, fish and plant life.

Wetlands act as nature's water filtration and purification system. They slow surface runoff, and are capable of filtering pollutants from water before they enter our creeks, streams, rivers and lakes. This is the same water which eventually becomes our drinking water.

Wetlands help reduce flooding by acting like giant sponges to absorb excess water. They allow the slow release of water into creeks and streams to keep them flowing year round. When we cut down trees, fill in wetlands and pave over natural areas, we lose these natural sponge areas. As a result, water moves through creeks and streams faster, causing increased flooding in the spring and dry creeks in the summer.

Most of our wetland areas have been eliminated through urbanization and agriculture. Over 93% of the land base in the Niagara Peninsula is privately owned. You can help protect water quality for future generations by restoring, protecting and rehabilitating wetland habitat on your property.

If every landowner protected or improved a small piece of wetland area on their property, these little changes would add up to make a big difference in improving local water quality.

5 simple things you can do today to make a difference

Preserve the Wetlands We Have

Many wetlands in the Niagara Peninsula have been drained for agriculture, residential and industrial development. Wetlands currently account for less than 4% of the landbase. In order to achieve healthy water quality and habitat diversity, we need to increase that number to a minimum of 20%.



Do



Don't

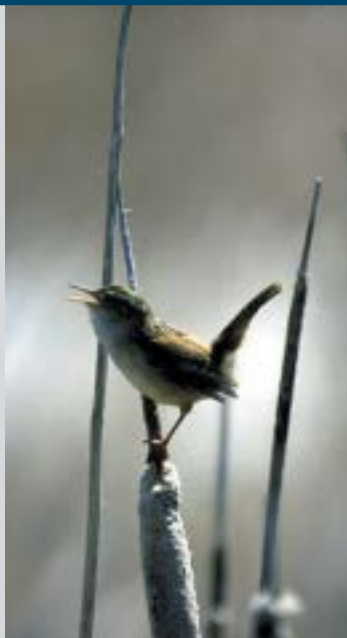
Control Access

Wetlands need to be protected. The landuse around a wetland can negatively impact its ability to perform important functions, such as providing sanctuaries for birds and fish. Limit agricultural activities such as livestock access by installing fencing. Create buffer areas of shrubs and trees between wetland areas and cropland. Keep motorized vehicle traffic such as tractors, ATVs, dirt bikes and snowmobiles away from wetlands.

Increase Habitat

The best safeguard for water quality is a wetland. The more species of plants it contains, the more diverse and healthy the wetland ecosystem will be. The roots of wetland plants will stabilize banks and help prevent erosion. Leafy vegetation acts as a filter to trap pollution, and provides cover and food for all types of wildlife, such as frogs, fish and dragonflies, the natural predators of mosquitoes. Mosquitoes carrying the West Nile Virus are typically not wetland species.

Wetlands help control mosquito populations, not increase them!



Before



During



Before



After



After



Create More Wetlands

If you do not have wetland areas on your property, you can create them. Creating a wetland pond is an easy way to start restoring nature. Growing a beautiful garden of native wetland plants will help replace the important natural wetland functions that may have been lost through development.

Use Native Plants

Maintaining a healthy green zone of native bulrushes, grasses and shrubs around a wetland improves water quality by naturally filtering pollutants. Native plants are adaptable to local climate and environmental conditions. They need very little maintenance and are resistant to most diseases and insects.

