

TRACKING THE ECOSYSTEM HEALTH OF THE CREDIT RIVER WATERSHED

Credit Valley Conservation's Integrated Watershed Monitoring Program (IWMP)



The Credit River watershed is made up of all the land that drains into the Credit River. It has lush forests, diverse wetlands and bubbling streams. These ecosystems (the interaction between living things and their environment) provide life-supporting benefits such as clean and abundant water, clean air, pollination, natural pest control, and opportunities to enjoy outdoor activities like hiking and fishing.

Our ecosystems face a variety of local, regional and global pressures. Some stressors include: loss and fragmentation of natural areas, poor water quality, pests, pathogens, non-native species, and climate change. Monitoring the ecological health of the Credit River watershed allows us to gauge the combined impact of these stressors on the environment and guide restoration and management efforts.

WHAT IS IWMP?

The Integrated Watershed Monitoring Program, or IWMP, is our long-term monitoring program that reports on the health of ecosystems in the Credit River watershed. The program started in 1999 and is one of the longest running monitoring programs of its kind in Canada.

Information and knowledge of the watershed is the basis of all our water and land management decisions. The data collected and analyzed from IWMP supports many of our initiatives.



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PROGRAM GOALS

1

Design and **deliver** an efficient, cost-effective monitoring program.

2

Manage data to ensure quality, interpretability, security, longevity and availability.

3

Analyse data regularly to evaluate the integrity of groundwater, stream, forest and wetland ecosystems.

4

Frequently **communicate** results to guide management decisions and strategies.

WHAT WE MONITOR

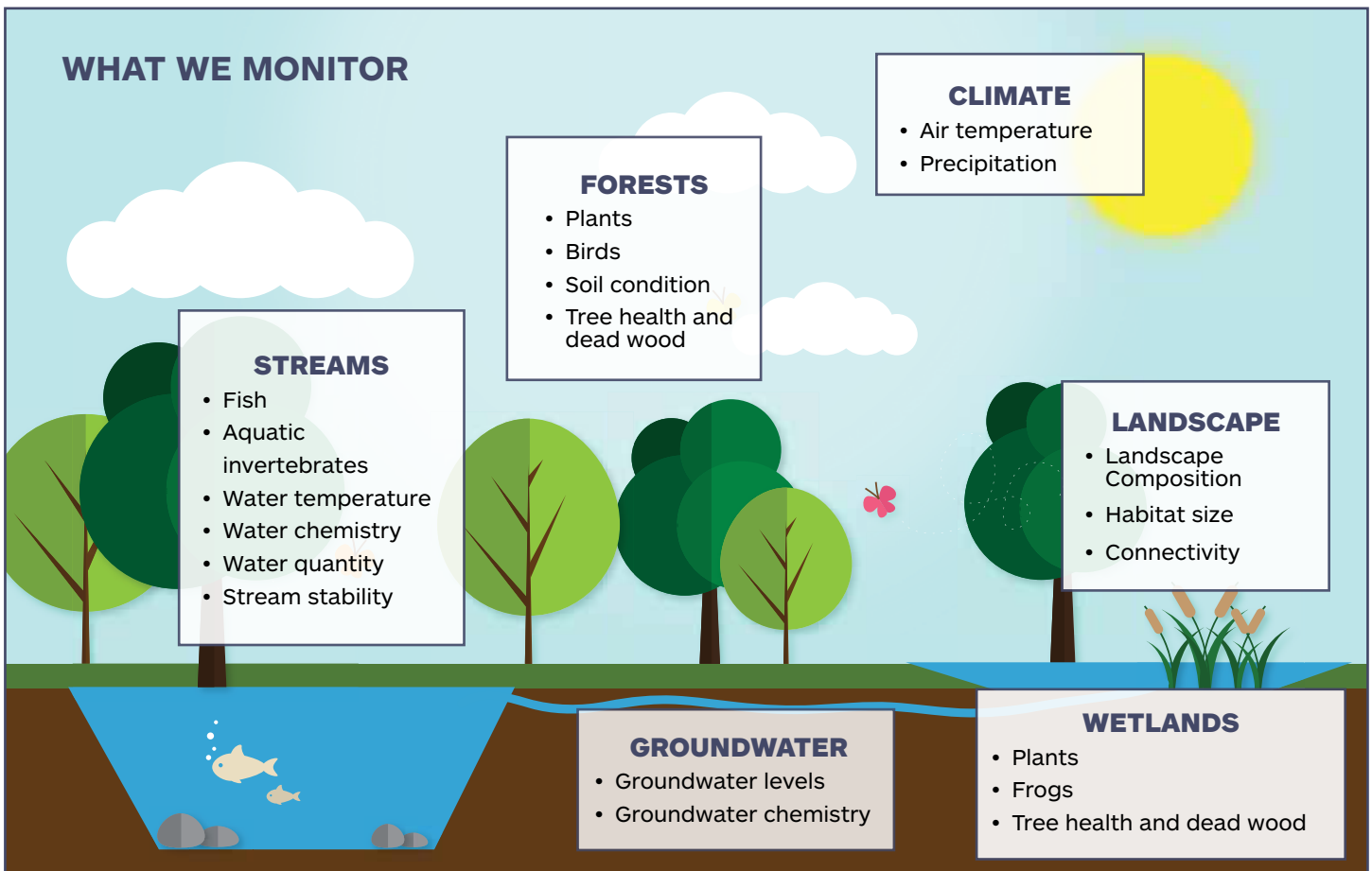
Through IWMP, we monitor the climate, groundwater, forests, wetlands and stream systems in the Credit River watershed.

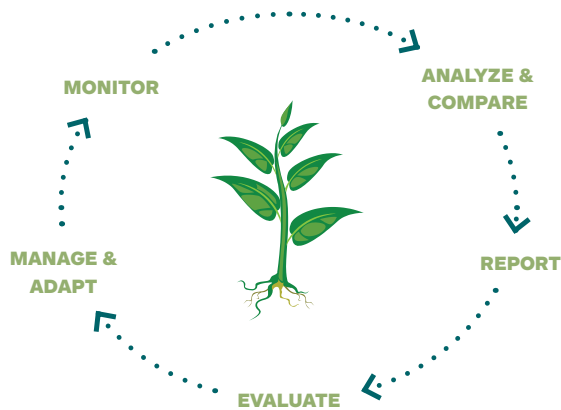
A number of living and non-living indicators are measured in each system. When examined together, these indicators provide a full picture of ecosystem health in the watershed.

HOW WE MONITOR

We monitor ecosystem conditions at different permanent sites across the watershed. Some sites are monitored annually, while others are monitored every other year. Some indicators are measured year-round with automated equipment and others are measured manually.

CVC staff who collect the data are highly trained, use well-maintained equipment, and follow rigorous standards, protocols and data management procedures.





HOW WE USE THE RESULTS

We compare results to established thresholds to see if there is a change in any of the environmental indicators. Results and trends are shared in the form of annual reports, trend reports and report cards. Results are used to guide management practices and inform long range planning for the watershed and our municipalities.

WHO IS INVOLVED

IWMP has strong partnerships with provincial (Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) and federal agencies (Environment Canada), municipalities in the watershed, academic institutions and neighbouring conservation authorities.

Public and private landowners are also involved. One-third of the IWMP monitoring sites are located on private land. Landowners are an important part of our successful monitoring program.

Volunteers and interns play an important role in data collection, literature review, information management and data analysis.



CONTACT US

Contact us to access IWMP reports or to learn how you can volunteer or sustainably manage your land.

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