



# Living by the Lake

LAKE ONTARIO INTEGRATED SHORELINE STRATEGY - NEWSLETTER - VOLUME ONE



*Holcim staff participating in CVC's community clean-up event at Rattray Marsh Conservation Area*

## BACKGROUND

*Lake Ontario* quenches our thirst, sustains our food supply, and soothes our soul with its natural beauty. The Great Lakes region represents one-fifth of the world's freshwater supply and is home to more than 200 rare plants and animals, including 40 species found nowhere else in the world.

Though industrial and urban development may dominate parts of the landscape, the shoreline teems with life. **Local businesses play an important role** in restoring and protecting the vibrant shoreline ecosystem. By partnering with Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), a growing number of businesses are doing their part for the local community and demonstrating their commitment to good corporate citizenship and social responsibility.

## STUDYING THE SHORELINE

CVC's multi-year study of the shoreline, *the Lake Ontario Integrated Shoreline Strategy (LOISS)*, will assist CVC, other agencies and the local community in better understanding the natural heritage of our lake and shoreline.

Once complete, it will provide clear guidance and steps we need to take as a community to protect and enhance the health of our shoreline.

## HOLCIM CANADA

### *Leading the Way Towards a Greener Shoreline*

Holcim Canada has made a strong commitment to environmental sustainability in the Credit River Watershed and world-wide. By partnering with CVC through the *Greening Corporate Grounds* program, Holcim is increasing biodiversity and improving environmental conditions at its Mississauga plant.

Holcim staff participated in CVC's community clean-up event at Rattray Marsh Conservation Area and planted native trees on the company's lakeshore property.

Holcim is taking a proactive approach to species conservation by protecting Peregrine falcon nests and allowing CVC ecologists to monitor birds, bats and fish at the Mississauga plant.

Founded in Switzerland in 1912, Holcim is one of the world's leading suppliers of cement and aggregates (crushed stone, sand and gravel). It also supplies ready-mix concrete and asphalt, and provide related services.

**This is the first in a series of newsletters exclusively for businesses and institutions near the lakeshore in Mississauga.**

## UNITARIAN CONGREGATION IN MISSISSAUGA

### *A New Haven for Local Wildlife Along the Lake Ontario Shoreline*

The Unitarian Congregation in Mississauga (UCM) is rapidly becoming a model site for institutional greening through its partnership with CVC through the *Greening Corporate Grounds* program.



*Native wildflowers are taking bloom at the UCM restoration site and attracting many butterflies and bird species*

Situated on a former farm at South Service Road and Hurontario, the congregation at UCM has been working hard to bring nature back to the site over the last decade. CVC's expertise in assisting businesses and institutions with ecological landscaping projects allowed the team to pull UCM's vision together and execute an ambitious series of projects.

The concept plan provided by CVC complemented the recent renovations to the main building, which include features such as beams that extend beyond the building in a deliberate effort to create bird habitat. The design reused fill from the renovation to create a berm that was planted with native wildflowers, shrubs and trees, which now attract monarch butterflies and birds.

The restoration project included a bioretention swale next to the parking lot that channels stormwater run-off safely into the ground. This reduces flooding and helps restore valuable groundwater reserves.

UCM participated in two CVC tree planting events this year where volunteers planted almost 1000 native plants around the property. Future projects include creating a forested front lawn, invasive species removal and woodland plantings.

## **BUSINESS AND BIODIVERSITY - FREE WEBINAR ON MARCH 14**

Local businesses are encouraged to attend a free webinar hosted by the Stewardship Network entitled *Environmental Stewardship on Corporate Lands* on March 14, 2012 from noon to 1:00 p.m. CVC staff will present strategies for engaging businesses in environmental protection and restoration efforts. Case studies will be presented profiling businesses engaged in protection and restoration efforts, many of which are within the LOISS study area. Please visit: [www.creditvalleyca.ca/business-webinar](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca/business-webinar)

## Shoreline Under Stress

### Habitat Loss

- As much as 80 per cent of the shoreline has been hardened with materials such as stone, concrete and metal retaining walls. Disturbing the natural coastal process at the shore disrupts habitat for fish and other aquatic life as well as birds, butterflies and turtles.
- Urban development has encroached on natural spaces along the shoreline. Trampling and over-fishing further degrade wildlife habitat.
- Pollutants and sediment mixing near the shoreline may be deposited in sensitive areas such as wetlands.

### Invasive Species

- Invasive species are a threat to native plants and wildlife. These aggressive intruders can be hard to manage. English ivy, periwinkle, round gobies, zebra mussels, and common carp are all taking a toll on native habitats and nutrient sources.

### Water Quality

- Phosphorous is a key factor in the excessive growth of algae along the waterfront. Due in part to its size, the Credit River is the second largest Canadian source of phosphorous into Lake Ontario.
- Urbanization affects the flow of streams and groundwater. This can result in increased pollution washing directly into waterways and the lake.

### Water Quantity

- Lake Ontario water levels are controlled by dams used to generate electricity and for navigation, negatively affecting natural processes in the lake.
- Climate change is affecting lake levels through increased evaporation and disruptions to wildlife habitats. A decrease in shoreline ice cover means that winter storms may have a greater impact on the shoreline.

## LOISS BACKGROUND SUMMARY AND DATA GAP ANALYSIS REPORT

CVC is currently in the first phase of the *Lake Ontario Integrated Shoreline Strategy (LOISS)*. This phase focuses on research to determine existing environmental conditions along the Lake Ontario shoreline within the City of Mississauga.

CVC's research consists of a review of existing reports and data as well as historical aerial photography. A list of missing data was compiled in the Data Gap Analysis portion of the report.

This list will be the basis for the LOISS work plan over the next few years. The *Background Summary and Data Gap Analysis Report* and associated appendices are available online at [www.creditvalleyca.ca/loiss](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca/loiss).

## LOISS TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

On Thursday January 26, 2012 CVC held a technical update session highlighting what has been accomplished to-date for the Lake Ontario Integrated Shoreline Strategy. The session also highlighted the future direction of the shoreline strategy and identified gaps in our understanding of the complex shoreline environment.

The exchange of ideas and guidance for future surveys, integration between disciplines, and prioritization of efforts will help develop a better understanding of the natural features, functions, and processes along the Lake Ontario shoreline. The presentations from this workshop can be found on line at: [www.creditvalleyca.ca/loiss/loiss-technical-update-session](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca/loiss/loiss-technical-update-session).



## LAKEVIEW WATERFRONT CONNECTION

The Lakeview Waterfront Connection proposes a public waterfront green space on the Lakeview shoreline by reusing locally generated fill material from Region of Peel and City of Mississauga infrastructure expansion projects.

This project envisions creation of vital coastal habitat and public trails to and along the waterfront, as well as new beaches, meadows, forests and wetlands. Visitors could potentially swim, fish, canoe/kayak, bird watch, picnic or simply enjoy the view of Lake Ontario from the Mississauga shoreline.

The Lakeview Waterfront Connection is being funded and overseen by the Region of Peel, and is led by CVC with assistance from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The project is being fully coordinated with the City of Mississauga's *Inspiration Lakeview* initiative.

([www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/inspirationlakeview](http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/inspirationlakeview))

The first phase in this multi-year project is an environmental assessment led by CVC. The public is encouraged to provide feedback on the project. Please visit [www.creditvalleyca.ca/lwc](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca/lwc) for more information and to find out how you can get involved.



*Proposed site of the Lakeview Waterfront Connection*

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Reduce the use of road salt, pesticides and fertilizers which make their way to the lake through groundwater and storm sewers.
- Choose native species for your landscaping projects and reduce lawn space in favour of more natural landscaping.
- Improve the ability of rainwater to soak into the ground by using permeable pavement, reducing paved spaces and where appropriate, routing downspouts into the garden.
- Get involved. Make sure your local, provincial and federal elected officials know you care about protecting the shoreline.



For more information visit: [www.creditvalleyca.ca](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca) or contact:  
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