



NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY

CREDIT RIVER WATERSHED AND THE REGION OF PEEL

What is the Natural Heritage Inventory Program?

CVC's Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) program identifies natural heritage features in natural areas across the Credit River watershed and the Region of Peel. This inventory work documents and maps the presence and distribution of plant communities, plant and animal species and special habitat elements in the study area on both public and private properties. The objective of the NHI is to provide a better understanding of natural features and functions in our watershed to support land cover mapping, land planning and land management.



Why do we need Natural Heritage Inventories?

The Credit River Watershed and the Region of Peel are located in one of the fastest growing regions of Canada. To support the protection and wise management of key natural areas, and to maintain a healthy environment for all, detailed information on the biological resources of the watershed must be accurate and up-to-date. The high quality information produced by the NHI program enables CVC and municipalities to identify and protect significant natural features in accordance with municipal and provincial policy.

How are Natural Heritage Inventories conducted?

The NHI Program has identified locations in the watershed where inventory data is needed. Each year a different set of natural areas are selected for field inventories. NHI field crews go to these sites, classify and map the vegetation that is present and list all of the plant and animal species they see. They also record disturbances to the natural areas so that future stewardship actions can be taken. Road-based inventories of breeding frogs and bat occurrence are conducted by driving the roads at night to hear their calls which allows species to be identified and mapped.



How are inventory data used?

The data collected goes into CVC's Natural Heritage database, which is quality-checked and managed to enable easy access and efficient data retrieval. The data is used by CVC staff for a wide variety of projects including stewardship, land use planning and land acquisition. Groups outside CVC including our municipal partners, agencies and consultants also use the data via data requests. NHI mapping updates CVC's land use and land cover mapping. Accurate mapping is critical for development of natural heritage systems within CVC and municipalities for updating official plans. Municipal partners also use the information to help guide protection and management of municipally owned natural areas. Summary reports on the field inventory results are provided to participating landowners, building lasting relationships, and are also publicly available online.



Where can I view some Natural Heritage Inventory products?

Site summaries, maps and reporting from the NHI program are hosted on the Peel Data Centre website at: www.peelregion.ca/planning/pdc/data/monitoring/watersheds/credit-river.htm

