

Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt

In 2005, the Ontario Government passed legislation to permanently protect 728,000 hectares of greenspace on the outer edge of the Golden Horseshoe region in Southern Ontario - the most highly populated area in Canada. The Greenbelt encompasses agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands including both the Niagara Escarpment and Oak Ridges Moraine. Conservation Halton owns and manages more than 10,000 acres of environmentally sensitive lands and supports the strengthening of environmental protection in Halton's watershed and in Ontario.



Kelso Conservation Area in Milton is part of the Greenbelt in Southern Ontario

Summary

Conservation Halton's viewpoint on the Greenbelt promotes the value of preserving and protecting natural lands to enhance the biodiversity of the watershed and the Golden Horseshoe area. In addition, it supports the creation of greenspace for rapidly expanding communities in the Halton Watershed.



- The Greenbelt complements Conservation Halton's strategy to focus on developing and enhancing parks, many of which are on the escarpment, for the long-term benefit of current and future residents.
- Conservation Halton supports the Growing the Greenbelt initiative proposed in February 2008 by the Ontario Government that would be used to consider municipal requests to expand the Greenbelt.

"Take it Outside" and explore the Greenbelt

- The Greenbelt is an effective means of protecting environmentally sensitive lands in Ontario's most populated area.
- According to the Province of Ontario's Places to Grow plan, the population in Conservation Halton's watershed is expected to increase. By 2031 Halton Region is projected to reach a total 780,000 residents, the City of Hamilton 660,000 residents and the City of Mississauga 787,000 residents. Therefore, the development and maintenance of greenspace for recreation as well as the protection of environmentally sensitive lands is critically important.
- Conservation Halton, in accordance with Halton Region's growth management plan Sustainable Halton, supports balancing population growth with environmental protection.
- Conservation Halton is committed to developing and maintaining a network of parks that explain the rich natural history, cultural heritage, and global significance of Ontario's Greenbelt and the Niagara Escarpment.
- Conservation Halton fully supports linking its already protected lands (close to 11,000 acres) with the Greenbelt protection area.

The Greenbelt includes 1.8 million acres (728,000 hectares) of environmentally sensitive and agricultural lands. The area extends from Rice Lake in Northumberland County to the Niagara River and is about 325 kilometres long and 80 kilometres wide at its widest point. Conservation Halton's watershed includes a number of significant areas within the Greenbelt plan area – the Niagara Escarpment, Sixteen Mile Creek Valley, Hayesland and Beverley Swamps, and Bronte Creek Provincial Park.

Watershed Corridors and Greenlands Strategy

Conservation Halton has a strategic conservation plan with a vision of creating a healthy watershed with clean streams, vigorous forests, and abundant greenspace. This plan includes a greenlands strategy focused on determining the optimum natural heritage system for the watershed. In partnership with Halton Region and the City of Hamilton, Conservation Halton identifies and protects environmentally sensitive lands through acquisition, stewardship agreements, and conservation easements. In addition, this strategy establishes natural corridors to provide ecological linkages and maintain healthy biodiversity throughout the watershed. The Greenbelt nicely complements the greenlands strategy with a mutual dedication toward benefiting the community for generations.

Conservation Halton Natural Champion for a Healthy Watershed



Conservation Halton is the community based environmental agency that protects, restores and manages the natural resources in its watershed. Conservation Halton has staff that includes ecologists, land use planners, engineers, foresters and educators, along with a network of volunteers, who are guided by a Board of Directors that includes municipally elected and appointed citizens. Conservation Halton is recognized for its stewardship of creeks, forests and Niagara Escarpment lands through science based programs and services.

For more information on the Greenbelt contact Conservation Halton:

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