

ROUGE RIVER WETLAND RESTORATION INITIATIVE



PROJECT GOAL

Although the Rouge River watershed has large areas of natural habitat, less than 1% of the total area is wetland. Wetlands provide important habitat for wildlife, clean water and reduce runoff, leading to a healthier watershed. The long term goals of the Rouge River Wetland Restoration Initiative are to;

- Restore wetlands and wetland function where possible throughout the Rouge River Watershed
- Create wetlands near historical wetlands where restoration of the original sites is no longer possible
- Create natural corridors for wildlife by connecting existing habitats with restored wetlands and buffer areas

THE NEED

Over time, most wetland habitats in the Great Lakes Basin have been lost or degraded through draining, land clearing and filling. The Rouge Park estimates that wetlands make up less than 1% of the Rouge River Watershed, and have determined that 10% wetland cover is necessary based upon the Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Ontario Ministry of the

Environment's, 1998, Framework for Guiding Habitat Rehabilitation in Great Lakes Areas of Concern. Restoration of wetlands, especially in the headwater areas of streams will not only provide necessary habitat, but will also help to increase base flows of headwater streams, reduce runoff, and reduce excess nutrient loading to streams. Benefits to the people include, an increase in the ground water that provides drinking water to rural communities, reduced topsoil erosion in agricultural areas, increased hunting and fishing opportunities, decreased flood damage, cleaner and increased carbon sequestration.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

With the help of our partners, Ontario Streams has:

- Created or restored 16.25 hectares of wetland in 5 locations (restoration sites had no wetland function and were usually an active or abandoned agricultural fields).
- Barkey Woods – 1 hectare of marsh mixed with shrub dominated wetlands were created on a corn field.
- Sewells Road – 0.5 created, and 0.5 hectares restored marsh on a soybean field.

- Ringwood Fish Culture Station – 2.5 hectares of restored marsh and 8 hectares of created marsh on soy a bean field.
- Newberry Park 1 hectare of marsh and reforested buffer restored on a baseball diamond and soccer pitch.
- Pickering Airport Lands – 3 hectares of marsh/ wet field restored on abandoned agricultural land.



Sewells Road Wetland Created Wetland Site

- 470metres of new stream channel have been created where old channels were historically straightened.
- More than 15 hectares of land was planted with trees to reforest areas adjacent to the wetlands
- One hectare of pit and mound habitat was created

PARTNERS

The Rouge River Wetland Restoration Initiative has received major financial support from the following organizations:

- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's Canada Ontario Agreement Funding and Community Fisheries and Wildlife Program,
- Environment and Climate Change Canada's Great Lakes Sustainability Fund
- Town of Richmond Hill
- Regional Municipality of York
- Rouge Park
- Oakridge Moraine Foundation
- Wetland Habitat Fund
- York Environmental Stewardship



Created Wetland at the Ringwood Fish Culture Station