

Report Card

GLOSSARY

Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) - an area designated by the Ministry of Natural Resources for its natural heritage, scientific or educational value.

Areas of Concern (AOC) - a geographic area identified by the International Joint Commission required to be cleaned-up under the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

Aquatic invertebrates - aquatic animals lacking a backbone (e.g. mayflies, caddisflies, worms, clams) that spend at least a portion of their life cycle in the water.

Aquatic habitat - all of the components, such as rocks, logs, weeds and water, that aquatic organisms rely on to survive.

Baseflow - the groundwater contribution which maintains the volume of baseflow in a stream, critical for quantity and thermal control, which may include direct discharge, discharge to wetlands, and bank seepage.

Biodiversity - the number and variety of species and habitats within a given region.

Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) - built in overflows called combined sewer overflows act as relief points by letting excess flows leave the sewer system before treatment, emptying into the nearest water body.

Conservation Foundation - an independent, community-governed charity created to provide vision, community support and fundraising programs for the environmental protection activities of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). Recently, the Foundation launched *The Living City: It's Our Habitat*, a \$35 million campaign to develop an environmental vision for our City Region of Toronto, Peel, York and Durham.

Cross connections - illegal connections between sanitary sewers and storm sewers.

Conveyance - controlling stormwater within the stormwater system (e.g., in pipes, using porous pipes that let some of the water filter into the ground).

Contaminant - any physical, chemical, biological or radiological substance or matter that has an adverse effect on air, water or soil.

Don Watershed Natural Heritage Strategy - a strategy, currently under development, to identify core habitats and corridors and provide guidelines for the protection and restoration of terrestrial and aquatic habitat.

Downspouts - roofleaders that collect rainwater from the roof of a house, often connected to storm sewers in older developments.

Ecosystem - a term used to describe the interdependence of species in the living world, both with one another and with their physical environment.

End-of-pipe - controlling stormwater just before it enters the watercourse (e.g., stormwater ponds).

Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) - area identified by the TRCA, that contains critical wildlife habitat, rare flora or fauna, or performs a vital ecological function (e.g., groundwater recharge, wildlife corridor).

Exfiltration - porous pipes that move some water to the watercourse but allow for some water to filter into the soil.

Fauna - includes all vertebrate and invertebrate species.

Flora - includes trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants (such as wildflowers), grasses, sedges, ferns, mosses and their allies.

Flow - the volume of water that passes a given point per unit of time.

Hydrology - the science that studies water properties, circulation, principles and distribution.

Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) - a measure of fish community associations that is used to identify the general health of the broader stream ecosystem.

International Joint Commission (IJC) - established in 1909 to assist the USA and Canada in decisions regarding the lakes and waterways that form the boundaries between the two countries.

Impervious area - lands with no recharge potential due impermeable surface treatment (e.g. concrete, asphalt, rooftops).

Infiltration - the movement of water into soil or porous rock.

ISO 14001 - an internationally recognized standard for companies to follow when implementing an Environmental Management System; a management system that helps ensure the success of their corporate environmental programs.

Leaf Area Density - a measure of effectiveness of urban trees in improving the urban environment that estimates the total surface area of leaves on trees in a given urban area, taking into consideration tree size, distribution and health.

Lot-level controls - controlling stormwater at the source; at houses, businesses, on streets and in parks (e.g., disconnecting downspouts, using rainbarrels...).

Meadows - open terrestrial habitats dominated by grasses and wildflowers. They include natural habitat such as tall grass prairie or savanna, as well as old fields.

Naturalization - the process of allowing an area to revert to a natural habitat through a passive “hands-off” approach, or through active ecological restoration.

Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) - community groups, without ties to government agencies, engaging in advocacy and/or action pertaining to the environment.

Noxious Weed Act - the Provincial Statute that governs the control of noxious weeds in Ontario.

Pesticides - a substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying or mitigating any pest or to regulate plant or leaf growth.

Potential Leaf Area Density - a measure of the potential for an urban area to support optimum tree cover, taking into consideration the fact that buildings occupy a large part of the available area.

Priority toxic substances - persistent substances that are extremely toxic which are targeted for virtual elimination through significant reduction in their use, generation or release (e.g., banned substances such as mirex, aldrin, chlordane, and DDT that are no longer manufactured but are still present in the environment).

Provincial Water Quality Objectives (PWQO) - objectives that have been established for each key water quality parameter in order to protect a particular use.

Riparian habitat - trees, shrubs, and grasses growing within 10 metres of a stream.

Sediment - sand, silt and clay particles derived from weathering of soil or rock material.

Stormwater - rainwater that runs off urban and rural areas, flows through ditches and storm drain systems, and empties into rivers and lakes untreated.

Stormwater treatment pond - stormwater management facility (e.g., wet ponds, dry ponds, wetlands, infiltration basins) that receive water from a conveyance system (ditches, sewers) and discharge the treated water to the receiving waters.

Stormwater Management Upgrade Plans - a comprehensive plan for addressing stormwater issues in order to return more natural flows to a river system; identifying and prioritizing all areas of opportunity for managing stormwater at the lot-level, the conveyance level and/or the end-of-pipe level.

Superbuild Fund - through Ontario’s SuperBuild Corporation, \$20 billion (½ from the Province and ½ from the private sector) will be invested in hospitals, high technology links, highways, educational institutions, and new parks and natural resources in northern communities.

Surface depression storage - a low area where water can pool; allows for evaporation and therefore less water in the rivers.

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) - a provincial/municipal partnership established in 1957, under the Conservation Authorities Act, to manage the renewable natural resources of the region’s watershed. The TRCA is a leader in urban and near-urban watershed management, particularly the protection and regeneration of rivers and greenspace.

Terrestrial habitat - a native environment where a plant naturally lives.

Watershed - land area from which water drains to a particular surface water body.

Water quality - a term to describe the chemical, physical and biological characteristics of water with respect to its suitability for a particular use.

Weir/Instream barriers - a structure in a river that hinders or prevents the upstream movement of fish and other aquatic organisms.



GLOSSARY CONTINUED

Wet Weather Flow Master Plan - a plan to address stormwater management issues in the City of Toronto.

Wetlands - places that are permanently or seasonally inundated by shallow water. They include various kinds of marshes, swamps, bogs and fens. Wetlands are important for water filtering and retention, flood control, wildlife habitat and aesthetic values.

Woodland or forest - a self-perpetuating natural habitat dominated by trees. Tree plantations can also be considered woodlands, although they do not have the full range of biodiversity values inherent in a natural forest. Woodlands are important for water retention, air quality, climate regulation, wildlife habitat, aesthetics and resource values.

Young-of-the-year fish - juvenile fish less than one year old.

Public Opinion Survey

As in 1996, a major Angus Reid poll was conducted to assess the level of watershed awareness. Telephone interviews were conducted with a total of 500 adults ages 18+ living within the Don Watershed. Interviews were conducted between May 15 and 23, 2000. The margin of error for the overall sample is +/- 4.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. It should be noted that the margin of error is larger for subgroups of the study sample. The final data were weighted to reflect the actual household population for each region and the overall gender composition of Toronto.

In those instances where the 2000 study data is compared with the 1996 study data, the results of the 2000 study are filtered to include only those respondents who are 25 years or older and consider themselves a decision maker in the household (n=411). The margin of error with this subgroup is 4.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. This reflects the methodology of the 1996 study, whereby respondents consisted of those residents living within the Don Watershed who were 25 years or older and considered themselves a decision maker in their household (n=600).



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- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)
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