

Credit Valley Conservation marks 60 years

By **PETER CRISCIONE**
Metroland Media

When it rains, it floods. When it's dry, it's parched. When the temperature raises, the heat waves last.

Climate change has seen large swaths of the planet assaulted increasingly by heat waves, torrential rains, and flooding that are the result of human action.

But concerns about the impact of humanity on the environment aren't new. Neither is the danger posed by expanding urban boundaries near flood plains and watercourses.

Six decades ago, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC) was formed with a man-

date to protect and enhance all natural resources of the Credit River, which stretches 90 km from its headwaters in Dufferin County, through nine municipalities, and eventually draining into Lake Ontario at Port Credit.

On Friday (May 9), municipal and provincial dignitaries will join volunteers, donors, and CVC officials for a special ceremony celebrating the organization's 60th anniversary.

"I think it's always great to look back and celebrate one's accomplishments over a sixty-year timeframe," said Deborah Martin-Downs, CVC Chief Administrative Officer.

The event took place at the

CVC administrative office, 1255 Old Derry Rd. in Mississauga with guest speakers, a ceremonial tree planting, plaque dedication and cake cutting.

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation performed a water blessing along the shores of the Credit River.

In 1954, the Credit Valley Conservation authority was formed with purpose of protecting one of the region's most valuable natural resources.

Although representing different interests, agricultural, naturalist and sportsmen's groups were united by concerns that much of the

resources surrounding the Credit River were in an 'unhealthy state' as a result of poor land, water and forestry practices. The combined impacts of drought and deforestation led to extensive soil loss and flooding had prompted government and other stakeholders to act. Six decades on, and the threat to our natural green spaces and waterways still exist. In fact, many would argue the threat posed by human activity on nature has reached dangerous levels.

As science, academia and government place a brighter spotlight on issues of climate change and the environment, the conservation movement

is regaining its position as an important community partner.

Locally, urban sprawl continues to eat up land. When talking about the weather, extreme events like the flooding that swept through Brampton and Mississauga last July, and the brutal December ice storm that downed thousands of trees, have punctuated the impact of human activity on the planet.

As environmental issues are thrust to the forefront of public debate, the CVC and conservation authorities find themselves in the midst of a renaissance for the green movement.

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