

Landowners can apply for funding to improve private wetlands

The Wetland Habitat Fund (WHF) is making financial and technical assistance available to private landowners in Halton to protect, enhance and restore existing and degraded wetlands on their property.

Interested landowners are encouraged to act quickly, as applications for the WHF must be in by January 31, 2000.

The fund has been estab-

lished by Wildlife Habitat Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resource and is a component of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

Eligible projects may receive funds for up to 50 per cent of the total project cost to a maximum of \$5,000.

Funds may be used for projects like the creation of vegetable buffers alongside wet-

lands, fencing to restrict livestock access with the provision of an alternative water source, wildlife nesting structures, and the construction of low level water retention structures. Other improvements may also qualify.

"Wetlands are gaining more recognition for the diverse and productive habitats they provide for wildlife as well as the significant role they play in

water quality and quantity for people" explains Robert Messier, WHF regional representative.

"The Wetland Habitat Fund can assist landowners to improve the health and diversity of their wetland, improve water quality and wildlife habitat".

Since the fund was launched two years ago, it has approved 194 projects and committed

over \$576,000 in financial assistance to landowners in Southern Ontario.

This effort has resulted in the protection and enhancement of over 5,500 acres of wetlands and 5,900 acres of the adjacent upland.

Interested landowners should contact Robert Messier at 519-621-2763 Ext. 244 for further information and to arrange a site visit.

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