



## Green Footsteps

# Environmental protection – beyond the near and now

Editorial comment by  
Conservation Halton Chairman  
Jean L. Williams



Last November, I had the pleasure of attending the A.D. Latornell Conservation Conference in Alliston, Ontario, where 800 people met to share information about current conservation practices and environmental issues. There was a wide range of speakers including Ontario's new Minister of the Environment, Leona Dombrosky and Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller. Mr. Miller gave a rousing speech called "Thinking beyond the near and now."

Mr. Miller asked a pertinent question: "When did we become so focused on the present moment and our immediate situation?" He recalled that it wasn't so long ago that this society was focused on building a better future for our children and our grandchildren. It was then that we had a broader sense of the connections between the landscape, the communities of Ontario and the economy.

"But today, we neither measure nor monitor the continuing loss of deciduous forests in southern Ontario," said Mr. Miller, and "we are without a provincial program to replant trees on private lands in the south." He also noted our lack of an overall strategy to protect our biodiversity. We accept as inevitable that the population of the GTA will continue to swell by 100,000 new residents every year. "Yet," he asked, "have we really come to grips with what that will mean for our remaining forests, water-courses, air quality and our most productive agricultural land?"

Mr. Miller concluded with an important and urgent message: "To succeed, all of us, not just government, will have to think beyond those matters near to us and close

at hand. We have to consider and support initiatives that are in the interest of the broader natural environment of Ontario . . . . Not just now, in the short term, but over the long term for the benefit of future generations."

For almost 50 years, Conservation Halton has been responsible for environmental planning, flood control, preservation of natural lands and creating greenspace for public enjoyment. During this time, I believe our community based agency has been looking beyond the near and now.

Over 3,600 hectares of significant natural lands have been acquired for preservation, conservation and enjoyment by watershed residents. Integrated watershed planning and stewardship programs have protected thousands of acres of public and private natural lands. Eleven conservation areas have been developed and are visited by 600,000 people each year. This includes two conservation education centres that are providing educational programs to thousands of students and families each year. Four water control structures have been built to provide flood protection and stream flow augmentation and more than 22 kilometres of watercourse channel improvements have been built to reduce flooding and erosion.

It looks like 2004 will be a year of unprecedented growth in our watershed. We will be dealing with many complex issues and challenges. Conservation Halton will continue to speak out loudly and clearly and think beyond the near and now to realize our mission of protecting and enhancing the natural environment from lake to escarpment, for present and future generations.

## Conservation Halton

Protecting the Natural Environment  
from Lake to Escarpment

Conservation Halton is a community based environmental agency that protects local eco-systems and contributes to the quality of life in communities throughout its area of jurisdiction, known as the watershed.

### Our Vision Symbol:

The turkey vulture is a common bird in the watershed that symbolizes the significant natural heritage of the area. Cradled in the bird's soaring wings, in a protective manner, a stylized Niagara Escarpment with trees portrays the watershed's most significant natural feature, with the wavy line depicting the creeks and Lake Ontario shoreline.



### Our Mission:

To protect and enhance the natural environment from lake to escarpment for present and future generations.

### Our Environmental Promise:

- To provide responsible stewardship of significant natural areas held in trust for watershed residents and beyond.
- To help people appreciate and enjoy the watershed's important natural features including the world-renowned Niagara Escarpment, the Lake Ontario shoreline, and the abundant wetlands and creeks in a sustainable nature.
- To provide expert and cost-effective environmental management services to our municipal partners.
- To provide watershed planning services to protect and enhance the natural features of our watershed.
- To make ethical and objective decisions that balance the needs of the environment with the need for human safety and economic development.
- To conduct our environmental protection programs in a business-like manner while knowing that watershed residents own this natural heritage, which greatly contributes to the health of our community.

### Your community representatives

#### Regional Municipality of Halton

##### Burlington

Carol D'Amelio  
Jim Sweetlove  
Chris Walker  
John Vice

##### Milton

Gordon Krantz  
Brian Penman

##### Oakville

Keith Bird  
Allan Elgar  
David Patterson  
Carel Schoch

##### Halton Hills

Bob Inglis  
Bryan Lewis

##### Township of Puslinch Stephen Peebles

#### Regional Municipality of Peel

Mississauga  
Keith Lalonde  
Jean Williams

Hamilton  
Brian McHattie  
John MacLennan

## Macleans honours Conservation Halton



Conservation Halton has been selected as one of Canada's top 100 employers for 2004 by the editors of *Macleans* magazine. This is *Macleans*' fourth edition of a best-selling book that has become a bench mark with the business community and job seekers.

"We are very pleased that our environmental agency has been selected as one of Canada's Top 100 Employers," says Conservation Halton Chairman, Jean Williams. "The Board and staff have worked hard during the past few years to improve our human resources practices.

We know how important it is to attract and keep quality staff dedicated to protecting the environment."

With the competition for quality staff, companies are looking to differentiate themselves by how they manage people. The top 100 businesses have demonstrated this commitment and are recognized as great places to work. Conservation Halton shares this achievement with high profile companies such as the Bank of Montreal, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), Dofasco Incorporated, IBM Canada, Ikea Canada and the TDL Group Limited (Tim Hortons).

### Watershed Viewpoints

Trafalgar Moraine  
and 16 Mile Creek

There are a number of significant natural features throughout North Oakville that are associated with the Trafalgar Moraine and Sixteen Mile Creek valley that need to be protected. These features, which include wetlands, creeks and woodlots, have the potential of creating an east-west natural corridor to the Niagara Escarpment as well as providing critical greenspace for expanding communities.



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