

CVC study indicates

Recreational fishing on Credit River has a value of \$48M

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Staff Writer

A Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) study has calculated that recreational fishing on the Credit River is worth \$48 million.

"There is no question that we have an incredible recreational resource in the Credit River fishery, which is recognized across Ontario and well beyond," said Rae Horst, CVC Chief Administrative Officer. "What this study does is begin to demonstrate the economic value associated with a healthy river system."

Recreational resources, such as a sport fishery, are often considered public goods for which no price can be charged, thus determining its value

requires a sophisticated economic technique called the travel cost method-how much anglers are willing to spend to travel to a particular fishing spot.

According to this study, for Credit River anglers that's \$1.2 million annually.

"This means that, in total, all the (recreational) anglers who fish the Credit River would be willing to pay \$1.2 million dollars every year for the angling opportunities that the river provides," explained Jeff Wilson, CVC Ecological Goods and Services Project co-ordinator.

Almost 300 anglers stretching from Niagara Falls to Sault Ste. Marie who fish the Credit River completed an online survey between August 2006 and January 2007.

The most avid anglers fishing the

Credit River indicated they fished 100 days a year, while according to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' 2005 Survey of Recreational Fishing, the average angler in Ontario fished 17.2 days a year.

The Credit River provides more than 30,000 angling days (the number of anglers times the number of days spent fishing) every year with almost 18,000 of those occurring in the spring and summer.

Depending on the season, fishing destination, fish type sought, and expected catch rate, the average value of a fishing day ranged from \$9 a day to \$148 a day.

The study's methodology will allow Credit Valley Conservation to forecast changes in angler's behaviour as a result

of changes to the fishery. For example, if a habitat restoration project was being considered that would result in improvements to the fishery, the increased economic value from the improvements could be estimated.

"This type of information is essential for ensuring that public dollars are spent on projects providing the largest possible improvement to the social and economic well-being of watershed residents," stated Wilson.

The survey results also indicated that the three most heavily fished sites along the Credit are: from Erindale Park to Hwy. 403 in Mississauga; Trout Unlimited Private Agreement Waters located near Inglewood in Caledon and the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park in Caledon.

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