

Light Lines

JOURNAL OF THE CREDIT RIVER ANGLERS ASSOCIATION
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Associations Course to 2005 Set Out



THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION

Trillium Foundation makes major Contribution

The Credit River Anglers Association Executive is proud to publish phase 3 of the Credit River Rehabilitation Strategy. This document includes a timeline of activities, and goals for the next few years. Included in the project report are maps of areas where CRAA has planted, will be planting, as well as financials for the next few years.

A key component of any long term project is the financial support to propel the vision into reality. With consistent effort and detailed goals it was possible for the association to secure funding. On March 28, it is with great excitement that John announced to executive and committee members that The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) has earmarked \$225,000 over a three year period to help us succeed in our goal.

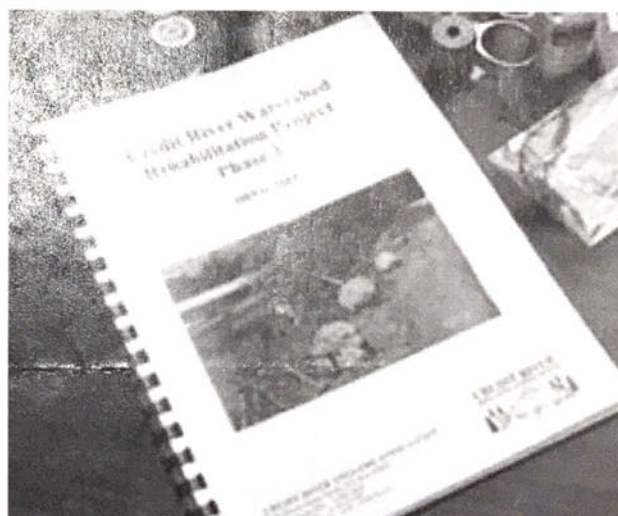
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- Brown trout radio telemetry update

Not only does this support ensure success, but it could be considered an endorsement of the work that is being performed. Time and again the associations activities

have been lauded by local municipalities. Continued municipal support has financed our efforts with cash and in-kind donations. This multi year grant from OTF is yet another validation of the methods employed to achieve our main objective: protecting cold water, and cold water species in the Credit River Watershed.

It is with gratitude and enthusiasm that we pledge to apply Trillium Foundation dollars to riparian improvement of the Credit River. We hope to see more and more volunteers get involved in their own back yards, as community activism is the mechanism for change.



With more volunteer involvement and adoption of Bronte and Oakville Creeks in Halton, and Mimico and Etobicoke Creeks in Peel the benefit of this three year plan will improve the enjoyment of more anglers. Members with suggestions to improve stretches of their favorite stretch should contact the hotline or email info@craa.on.ca with their input for new projects.



CREDIT RIVER
ANGLERS ASSOCIATIONCredit River Anglers Association
Light Lines

Contributions are welcome from all members and non-members alike. Send you articles of interest, messages or suggestions to:

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CRAA Executive

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Secretary : Matt Taggart

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Webmaster : Jerry Tusa

**CRAA Members receive a
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listed below!**

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News and Announcements

Conservation Halton Ecologist
Dave Featherstone Leaving

Dave has transferred to the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) to become the Director of Watershed Management. Dave was always enthusiastic to offer technical assistance, advice and constructive criticism towards the current and future projects CRAA is planning for the Bronte Creek watershed. Dave has been an active participant with various conservation groups in the Halton region, and his passion for the outdoors will sorely be missed here. Good luck on your future endeavours and challenges that await you!

Project Manager
Vacancy Filled

Please Welcome Brendan O'Farrell as CRAA's Project Manager for 2003-2005 project. Brendan has a big job ahead, but has the passion to make it happen. Good luck! Please all welcome him to the CRAA family, or since he is working directly under me, out of the frying pan and into the fire.

John



HELP WANTED

Volunteer contributions to *Light Lines*—your member newsletter. Send your piece to info@craa.on.ca.

Nursery Vandalism

Recently our small tree nursery site was vandalized. A locked shed was broken into and the contents spread out in the general area. No damage to the trees or equipment was reported.

FEED BACK

With successful tree plants in the lower river and work proceeding on the upper river the its in the associations interest to branch out to maximize our angling opportunities. With the adoption of Mimico, Etobicoke, Sixteen mile (Oakville), and Bronte creeks we hope to capitalize on some previous successes to rehabilitate what we can on those basins. Given the association members may live in the region we'd like your feedback on what you would like to see happen—regulation changes, tree plants, urbanization intervention etc.

Special thanks for support from the following organizations:

CITY OF MISSISSAUGA



Pettos Perspective:

By Pete Pettos

As I sit here at my fly tying bench I can't help but feel distraught and saddened about what is happening here and now in regards to the river I and many of you love so much. Urban sprawl is the biggest threat to this precious watershed. With it come more golf courses, subdivisions, eradication of woodlots, sanitary sewers, storm sewer outfalls and more.

In today's eco-friendly recycling society people with large cash flow seem to cut corners to save or make more money. The end result is a watershed under stress. But under all the dark clouds there is a beam, or beams of light. These beams of light are the conservation and fishing groups working to protect this valuable resource, the Credit River watershed.

Some like CRAA started with humble beginnings, working on the lower river in Erindale Park.. They concentrated their efforts in keeping park lands along this stretch of river clean of garbage and open to public fishing. As well as small tree planting, enhancing in-stream structure with boulder placements and bank stabilization. Through these efforts the public now enjoys a year round recreational fishery which mainly consists of steelhead and Pacific salmon. It is sad, but true that without the efforts by CRAA there would be no steelhead in the Credit River and salmon fishing would be closed off everywhere in the lower river, including Erindale Park!

In the upper watershed the river exists much as it did 20 years ago when I started fishing the area as a kid. Brown trout and brook trout inhabit the majority of the river above Inglewood, and brook trout cover most of the upper watershed right to Orangeville and

Erin. The brook trout are native fish and the Browns were stocked for several decades until a self sustaining population developed in the 1960's. TU (Greg Clark Chapter) and IWFFC were the guardians of the Forks sections. TU pushed for the special regulations of (1 fish limit, minimum 50 cm (19.7") for brown and brook trout) in the Forks Provincial Park and the TU section. This was to protect the fish from over harvest where the resident fish are very susceptible. TU and IWFFC also put a lot of work into this section of river with lunger structures, hydraulic lifts, stabilizing banks, planting trees and setting up the TU section with private land owners.

This is in many ways a brief history about the key fishing parties concerned with the health and angling opportunities in the Credit River.

Up to this point it all sounds good, but over the past few years a problem has arisen between the groups over the issue of migratory versus resident fish. The perceived migratory guys (CRAA) started to encroach and complete projects on the whole watershed, including the upper watershed. This was to improve water quality in the watershed and improve habitat for both resident fish and migratory juvenile habitats. Some fly guys (TU and IWFFC) became a little uncomfortable and nervous with the migratory situation being so close to home in their pride and joy upper watershed. They have concerns over the impacts migratory fish may have on resident fish

This should in no way stop the formation of a coalition to pursue collaborative work on the credit.



TREES ON THE CREDIT

In most of Credit River Angler Association projects we plant trees. Constantly we plant trees. Over the past 13 years CRAA has planted 117,000 native trees. Why is this important? Trees are vital members of watershed ecosystems. Why? Here are a few reasons:

1) First and foremost SHADE! The shade provided by Trees is welcomed by many species in the watersheds ecosystem. This is far more critical when we consider that mean summer temps of the Credit river are in the lethal zone for trout survival. Brook trout, the most discerning salmonid inhabitant of the Credit River can survive a range of temperature up to around 24°C depending on other factors including dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity.

2) Providing a means to hold earth in place, trees reduce silt. Silt clogs vital spawning gravel and smothers eggs and alevin. So by holding earth on the bank, trees reduce the current widening trend on our river.

3) While holding earth on the bank, Trees also slow the flow of storm waters. The vast network of roots creates capillary retention of large quantities of waters. This slows the flow of heavy rains allowing the river to carry a more stable flow of water over a longer period of time. With out this extra retention time rain water runs into the river in fast moving streams. This causes premature erosion of river banks and wide swings between peak flow and normal flow.

4) Trees also help keep the river in a young narrow configuration. In many stretches of the Credit river water trickles inches deep across a river bed that is sometimes 30-40 feet wide. These wide stretches of river rarely have any tree cover. No tree cover means

no shade. This is a prescription for temperature increase and loss of trout habitat

5) And as far as fish go, trees provide an excellent source for terrestrial foods like ants, beetles, and hoppers - and if the tree spans the river in a convenient way these terrestrial insects fall right into the river where they are an easy meal for all sorts of fish.

While we plant trees, there are many forces that counter us including rodents eating the bark, ice flows ripping trees out during thaw, disease, and summer drought.

CRAA has been able to allow our seedling trees to mature by planting them in a safe, managed environment (with thanks to Sheridan Nursery). Planted in plot soil and watered on a weekly basis through the hottest summer months the rate of survival increases dramatically. In CRAA's nursery plot we are growing white spruce, white pine, sugar maple, silver maple, eastern cottonwood, balsam poplar, green ash and white and black cedar trees.

CRAA has also been able to secure an alternate source of mature trees through Square One Properties Inc. By transplanting mature trees the impact of shade on the river will be immediate.

By diligently looking for new properties to plant and offering the trees and labor for free it is the Credit River Anglers Associations goal to keep the waters cool and the flood waters controlled that is achieved.

M. T.



CRAA's Goals and Objectives

By John Kendell, President, CRAA

The issue of species mix and general misinformation as a result of the species issue continue to surprise and disappoint me. This issue has festered since 1995 when CRAA first approached the MNR to allow steelhead over Norval as they had been allowed prior to 1989 so they could sustain a wild population. Before that everyone was happy, CRAA was a lower river group and the others worked in and around the Forks of the Credit. When I took over I immediately expanded CRAA to a watershed level, simply for the fact that the river starts in Orangeville so any work done upstream improves the lower river too! We could turn Erindale into an old growth forest and yet it would have a minimal impact if we did nothing upstream.

I have written this foreword to lead you into CRAA's formal mission statement and mandate developed by CRAA's Board of Directors, Executive and committee members. It is aimed at clearing up any misconceptions and clearly stating CRAA's position, which we believe is reasonable, backed by science and fair for the river. It is also aimed at educating you as a CRAA member and to inform members of other groups and the general public about CRAA's goals and objectives so there is no misconception.

I find it necessary to clearly spell out CRAA's goals once again to clarify our position to reduce the level of misinformation we have encountered in the angling public. This begins at the Spring Fishing Show, where we have a booth and meet the public. Most people come up and say "you guys are doing great work", "Keep it up", "How can I help you guys?", etc. However, we are always confronted by a small number of individuals, usually anglers from the upper river who question "are you the guys trying to destroy the river?", "are you the guys who want steelhead in the Forks" and so on. The latter comments are the result of complete misinformation and are false. We all want better environmental laws, more enforcement, less water taking, more areas to fish, but this one little issue continues to divide some people who are seemingly unwilling to share the river. CRAA's position has never changed and has been published in our newsletter since 1997, website and even in the IWFCC newsletter in (June) 1997.

Species Mix – CRAA was the first group to publicly request a new barrier be built in Inglewood in 1996 when we learned the old electro-barrier was not working. CRAA is the only group to support migratory access over Norval (Steelhead and Brown Trout), but **we also want a barrier at Inglewood** to segregate the Forks resident trout. CRAA strongly supports a barrier in Inglewood to segregate the fish because we do not want to impact the existing fishery in any way. CRAA chooses Inglewood as the site of the barrier for several reasons. Firstly, there is very little fishing done below Inglewood for resident brown trout because there are far fewer fish and most land is private and heavily subdivided there is no fishery to impact. Secondly, the resident brown trout in the section below Inglewood tend to be larger fish and have been proven to out compete juvenile steelhead (and in fact eat the juvenile steelhead) in published scientific studies. Thirdly, the river from Terra Cotta to Inglewood is prime habitat for steelhead and should provide adequate juvenile habitat to support a quality fishery in the lower river, lakeshore and lake. The steelhead will also create new fishing opportunities in the Georgetown-Glen Williams-Terra Cotta area for fly fishing and potential dry fly water for steelhead due to stronger insect hatches. CRAA is trying to save the wild steelhead fishery and protect the resident trout fishery of the Forks at the same time. Others are trying to protect the resident fish at the expense of migratory fish.

Brown Trout Telemetry Study

Jan, 2003



Hello All

The study is still going strong despite the fact that I am now in the midst of the academic portion of my commitment to UW. Apart from course work, I am also working up the scale samples taken during the surgeries for aging. I have also kept fish that have died during the study as well as others that I have found dead during my weekly traverses. I will extract the otoliths from the dead fish to assist with the aging part, as this (cranial) structure is more reliable than scales.

This winter is turning out to be a good old-fashioned Ontario winter, from what I remember of years past anyway. This is proving to be great news for the study in that the behaviors now being observed may be indicative of a hard winter. The river is nearly 100% frozen over, even in the groundwater rich upper section. Water temperatures have been steady in the range of 0.5 to -(minus)0.1 degrees. Springs that enter in the vicinity of the meadow in the upper section have been in around 3.0-5.5 degrees, while air temperatures

have been in the range of -4 to -20 during day and night periods.

Fish movement in January has been limited to within pool movement. No fish have made significant journeys out of their present holding locations. I have 6 fish from the Forks pool upstream to the meadow, 7 fish within a kilometer of each other around Sligo Bridge, 1 fish in Ken Whillans/Grahams property, and 9 fish distributed evenly from Old Baseline Road (Inglewood) down to the Sheridan Nursery property near 10th Line in Glen Williams. One fish is still missing since a brief thaw-freeze episode in December and I am continually trying to trouble-shoot that one but am only limited to where I can walk to. For the past month I have been able to hit 23 of the 24 fish on a weekly basis.

If you have any Qs, please don't hesitate to send me a note.

Cheers,

Michael Zimmer
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Guelph, Ontario
N1H 7J3
519-763-9984

**Membership and Renewal Information**

Are you concerned about the future health of the beautiful Credit River and Bronte Creek watersheds including all their tributaries? Do you enjoy fishing, hiking and other activities in the valleys? Do you want a cleaner river, better fishing and a cleaner environment for the future? Then you should join CRAA NOW. CRAA's address is on page 2.

New Member Fees:	1 year \$25.00	3 years \$55.00	(Please enclose cheque payable to CRAA)
Membership Renewal :	1 year \$20.00	3 years \$50.00	

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