

NEWS RELEASE

FREE SHORELINE PLANTING PROJECT IN OTTAWA NEIGHBOURHOODS

RIDEAU VALLEY, MARCH 23, 2011 — Spring gardening and landscaping on your mind? How about a shoreline makeover?

Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation's Making Shorelines Natural project is well on its way to planting 12,000 native trees and shrubs along four kilometres of degraded tributary shorelines within the City of Ottawa at no charge to participating landowners. The shoreline experts at Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) are implementing this community environmental project.

This two-year pilot project, generously funded by Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program, offers free shoreline planting restoration services -including a site visit by a qualified RVCA staff member, development of a site-specific planting plan, and all native shrub and tree plant material and planting labour- at absolutely zero cost to participating landowners.

We will be planting over three kilometres of shoreline, across 16 properties in May of this year. By summertime, thousands of young, vigorous new trees and shrubs will be flourishing along the 2011 target tributaries of Mud Creek, Stillwater Creek and Black Rapid's Creek with the help of dedicated community volunteers.

Meanwhile, new tributaries for 2012 include Stevens Creek, Sawmill Creek, Bilberry Creek, Becketts Creek and Nepean Creek. Property owners along these streams are encouraged to contact the RVCA to set up site visits, scheduled to begin in early June. We target the smaller tributary creeks and streams in the City of Ottawa because studies show that they are in much poorer health than our major rivers. Despite the fact that these feeder streams are the "life lines" of our larger waterways, they are often in poor environmental condition due to loss of vegetation, nutrient enrichment and altered drainage patterns.

Planting of shorelines (called naturalization) is the most cost-effective way to improve the health of these waterways. Well-vegetated shorelines act like filters removing contaminants like fertilizers before they reach the stream. Trees and shrubs also keep the water cool, provide wildlife and stream habitat, help prevent erosion and loss of soil, and clean the air by converting carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, into life-giving oxygen.

Thank you to Environment Canada's EcoAction Community Funding Program for their support.

For more information on Making Shorelines Natural in Ottawa or to schedule your site visit, please contact RVCA staff members Andrea Klymko (andrea.klymko@rvca.ca) at 613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504 ext. 1173 or Meaghan McDonald (meaghan.mcdonald@rvca.ca) at ext. 1192.

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