

Project Update Newsletter August 2020:

Flamborough Centre Park Restoration



Project Overview

Flamborough Centre Park, which is located at 969 Centre Road and is owned by the City of Hamilton, has a seasonally high water table, limited recreational opportunities and challenging maintenance requirements. Conservation Halton has been in discussions with the City to identify options for restoring the natural environment on a small portion of the property, which used to be a treed deciduous swamp, before the land was cleared. This project would involve removing a portion of the topsoil from the area, creating a shallow wetland, and planting the area with native species that are tolerant of wet ground conditions.

Project Updates

- Phase I of the public engagement consultation resulted in 35 responses from surrounding residents and community members. The feedback and input we collected will be included in the preliminary design meetings with the consultant.
- The selected environmental consultant is in the process of developing the preliminary design concepts.
- The Greenbelt Foundation published a press release covering the Flamborough Centre Park restoration project. The article can be found at [here](#) or at www.greenbelt.ca
- Phase II of the public engagement consultation for this project will provide surrounding residents and community members an opportunity to provide feedback and input into the drafted restoration design concepts.

Project Milestones

Pit and Mound Habitat - August 2020

- The first phase of restoration includes the creation of a Pit and Mound habitat. A Pit and Mound technique involves creating uneven topography to mimic the conditions of a natural moist forest floor and to provide a range of moisture and sunlight conditions. To create a Pit and Mound habitat, a series of 30 shallow pit and mounds (approximately 2m x 2m wide) and two larger (6m x 6m wide) pits will be constructed over the course of one day in August 2020. The pits will vary slightly in shape and size to provide a more natural appearance. The average pit depths will be 0.25 meters at their deepest. During construction, snow fencing will be installed to outline the perimeter of the site and to deter deer browsing post-restoration.

Wildlife Habitat - August 2020

- After the pit and mounds have been created, a series of wildlife habitat features will be installed. Larger woody debris such as logs will be placed around the pit and mound features. Smaller woody debris, such as branches, will also be placed. The woody debris will provide organic matter and act as natural habitat for a variety of wildlife and increase complexity on the landscape. Several Avian Perching Poles will be installed to attract birds to the site to rest and feed. These perches are made from untreated salvaged tree trunks and will stand approximately 4 meters high.

Vegetation Planting - Sept – Oct 2020

- A wide variety of native trees and shrubs will then be planted across the site to provide cover and foraging opportunities for wildlife. Some of the selected tree species include Silver Maple, Eastern White Cedar, Sycamore, Trembling Aspen, and Red Maple. Shrub species will include Highbush Cranberry, Spicebush, Nannyberry, Red Osier Dogwood, and various willow species. Given that the site was mown and maintained as a recreational field, this has

resulted in a vegetation community that is lacking diversity. A small volume of native wetland seed will be added to increase the sites vegetative diversity, which will include Swamp Milkweed, Boneset, Wild Bergamot, Spotted Joe-Pye Weed, and Blue Flag Iris. In addition to the potted plant stock that will be installed, native acorn species, such as Swamp White Oak and Bur Oak, will be added to the restoration site later in the fall.



Figure 1: The green polygon outlines the approximate area where the pit and mound restoration will take place in August 2020.

Did you know...

- Forested wetlands are the most common and most diverse type of wetland found in southern Ontario. Largely dominated by trees and shrubs, some take many years to develop. Estimates suggest that the coverage of wetlands has been reduced by 85% in the region.
- Pit and mound habitats are naturally created by shallow-rooted trees falling over in a storm, the result being a raised mass of roots and soil and an associated pit that often fills and holds water.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will this restoration project create an increase in mosquito populations?

The restoration project is proposed over an area which already exhibits seasonal flooding and provides mosquito habitat. Within the restoration approach, it is proposed to include habitat features to attract bats, dragonflies and birds which feed on mosquitoes. Waterfowl and dragonfly larvae will also eat the larval stage of mosquitoes.

2. What is the value of actively restoring the area versus leaving it to re-naturalize on its own?

The restoration plan that was developed to inform this project uses principles that are designed to mimic what the landscape would have looked like before the area was transformed from a treed swamp into a recreational field. Although the natural vegetative community would likely rebound and mature over a matter of decades based on the seed that has been stored in the soil, the improvement in the site's ability to store floodwaters would take much longer without using equipment to contour the landscape to create the pits and the wetland. By constructing these features and adding a wide variety of native plants, trees and shrubs, we are giving the area the best shot of succeeding as a resilient and diverse ecosystem while also reducing the risk of flooding for surrounding landowners.

3. How will this restoration project impact recreational usage of the park?

The ball diamond adjacent to Centre Road will not be impacted by the project as well as a portion of the field immediately west of there. The project location occurs in an area where recreational usage has not been noted and the turf is not maintained.

4. Will there be an increase in water flow that results in a risk of flooding to adjacent properties?

There will be no increase in water flow or flood risk to adjacent properties. The consultant water resource engineer will provide designs which attest to this.

5. Will this project have an impact on property taxes?

This project would not have any impact on the way property taxes are calculated by the City of Hamilton.

6. Is this project funded by municipal tax dollars?

No municipal tax revenues are proposed to be used for this project. City of Hamilton is providing in-kind support for the project as part of on-going park operations.

Funding for the design of this project has been provided by the Greenbelt Foundation. The Greenbelt Foundation is a collaboration with 13 conservation authorities with the aim to transform the health of the Greenbelt forests, wetlands, grasslands, rivers and lakes to provide unparalleled environmental services and benefit 9.2 million residents.

Contact

Please contact us if you have questions, comments, or would like to be added to the project mailing list.

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