

Credit Valley Conservation lands contribute to Canada's protected areas

By Brian Lockhart

Credit Valley Conservation, Ontario Nature, and Conservation Ontario have announced that 14 of CVC's properties officially contribute towards Canada's goal of protecting 30 per cent of land and waters by 2030.

The protected lands cover over 1,230 hectares, over three and a half times larger than the Toronto Islands.

Canada endorsed the goal, known as the 30 by 30 target, as part of the landmark Global Biodiversity Framework at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Montreal, in December.

Biodiverse places are areas where a large variety of life, including animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms, live together.

"We're thrilled 14 of our properties are now designated as Canadian Protected and Conserved areas. This is a major milestone in our collaborative efforts to safeguard the environment and promote ecological health in the Credit River Watershed," said Quentin Hanchard, Chief Administrative Officer at CVC. "These sites are essential to the conservation and enhancement of greenspaces in Southern Ontario, and we're proud to have them recognized for their significant contribution towards the federal targets for biodiversity conservation."

An assessment of the properties, conducted in partnership with Ontario Nature, determined that they met strict national standards for the protection of biodiversity, qualifying as protected areas.

"Ontario Nature would like to extend our congratulations to CVC on their incredible achievement," said Caroline Shultz, executive director of Ontario Nature. "Their dedication to implementing effective policies and management strategies has helped to ensure the preservation of biodiversity and protect the natural beauty of the Greater Golden Horseshoe area."

Greenspaces and natural systems are connected from the northernmost tip of the Credit River Watershed all the way down to Lake Ontario. By taking a holistic approach to conservation, watershed management ensures the preservation of biodiversity and ecological health for the long-term benefit of both wildlife and people.

The lands awarded protection status covers a diverse range of vegetation, such as deciduous forests, marshes, mixed swamps, and cultural savannahs, that provide grassland habitat for birds. Additionally, each property hosts many species that are at risk, like the monarch butterfly, eastern snapping turtle, loggerhead shrike, bobolink, chimney swift, eastern meadowlark, and Canada warbler.