

Nov 4, 2024

Re: RBG Letter of Support – Watershed Action Plan

**To Hamilton General Issues Committee**

As the shoreline landowner and habitat steward of the west tip of Lake Ontario we congratulate the City of Hamilton on the step of the creation of a Watershed Action Plan. The Royal Botanical Gardens properties have 25 separate creeks entering the property, the largest being Spencer Creek. Few of the creeks currently meet the standards of water quality needed to recover the Hamilton Harbour Area of Concern and include the habitat and visitor areas of Cootes Paradise and Grindstone Marsh.

Complicating watershed action is the issue of climate change, now exacerbating a significant existing practical issue of downstream infilling from the large-scale erosion of steep escarpment creeks. Again, in July 2024 massive cleanup projects were undertaken in neighbourhoods, at road crossings, and within RBG following intense large-scale rains. Escarpment creeks are eroding and depositing large amounts of sediment and rubble into the creek mouth areas at Cootes Paradise and Grindstone Marsh, and in many cases infilling nearby road underpasses, culverts and below escarpment community buried creek inlets. Cleanups costs are significant with this climate change impact understated in the Watershed Action Plan and represent future cost savings if remediated.

While there are many examples, I would draw your attention to two moderate sized creeks for focus.

1. Borers Creek – from Waterdown, with the issue in the area of York Rd crossing in Dundas, and perhaps one of the more urgent situations.
2. Ancaster Creek – from Ancaster with issues of large-scale slope collapse throughout the Dundas Valley and subsequent blockages and deposits at road and rail trail crossings between Olser Drive and Cootes Paradise.

A number of small creeks entering Dundas from the north are also causing dramatic challenges of cleanup in neighborhoods beyond the already notorious buried Sydenham Creek. This is also a significant theme of the Chedoke Creek Watershed and Hamilton neighbourhoods.

The steps to mitigation are perhaps found in Actions #5 and #10 of the Watershed Action Plan.

- #5 Review the Inventory of Watercourse Erosion Sites and Prioritize Remedial Action
- #10 – Install Low Impact Development Projects in Priority Areas

Sincerely



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