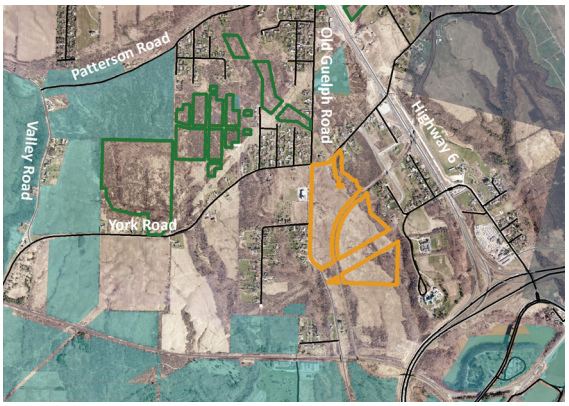
# Hopkins Tract

## Restoration Fact Sheet

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Established in 2015, the Hopkins Tract of the Pleasant View Natural Area, is located on the southeast corner of Old Guelph Road and York Road in Dundas. The 24 hectare (59 acre) property contains deep ravines associated with the Pleasant View Tributary lined with mature deciduous oak forests and contains several uncommon and rare Carolinian and savannah indicator species. This newly formed public natural area has been incorporated into the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System.




Throughout 2016, Conservation Halton developed a restoration plan for the property to achieve four measurable outcomes and facilitate community engagement. Implementation of the project would see one headwater streams enhanced, Carolinian deciduous forest planted, wetlands created, and several significant wildlife habitat features added to the newly protected natural area.

These actions will help to create a new and diverse natural area in the Pleasant View community. Once restored, this important piece of land will provide a vital ecological corridor between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment. By enhancing this connectivity it will provide a strong linkage for wildlife movement and improve water quality.

### The project focused on the following goals:


| Phase One | Phase Two |
|---|---|
| 2017 | 2018-2020 |
| • Pit and mound forest created<br>• Wetlands created<br>• Habitat structures installed | • Invasive species managed<br>• Wetland created<br>• Ravine forest enhancement |

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## LOCATION

Pleasant View Natural Area (Hopkins Tract)
201 Old Guelph Road
Dundas, ON

## WATERSHED

Grindstone Creek and North Cootes Paradise

## PROJECT START

2016

## SIGNIFICANT FEATURES & DESIGNATIONS

- NEC Escarpment Natural Area
- City of Hamilton Natural Heritage System
- Significant Wildlife Habitat
- Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System

## PROJECT STATUS

Ongoing

## NEXT STEPS

Phase 2

## PARTNERS

- Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
- Hamilton Community Foundation
- TD Friends of the Environment

## WHAT NEEDS HELP

The significant parcel was secured to further establish and widen a natural corridor link between Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment within the City of Hamilton. The property offers significant opportunities for the restoration of creeks, wetlands and Carolinian forest as well as protection of headwater stream ravines.

The restoration strategy for the property provides a direction to protect and restore natural ecosystems to ensure the health and diversity of native species, habitats, landscapes and ecological processes. These strategies will help to improve the natural functions of the landscape and hydrology of the two subwatersheds.

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Ephemeral wetlands are seasonally covered by shallow water which results in the development of a unique habitat which are some of the most diverse and productive ecosystems in the world. The coverage of wetlands in the Golden Horseshoe has been reduced by over 85%; by restoring new wetlands, an important step has been taken to reverse this loss where it has been the greatest.

Many lost wetlands leave signs on the landscape in the form of damp depressions and changes in soil colour. Restoring wetlands in these locations is strategic due to presence of suitable water conditions (surface drainage and groundwater) but also the ability to benefit from historic seed sources buried in the soil. Seeds of wetland plants can survive dormant for centuries!

At the Hopkins Tract, the creation of seven small wetlands was completed using small machines to gently contour shallow depressions to encourage water to stay on the landscape. These areas were planted with a mix of 22 locally native herbaceous wetland species and 6 wetland shrubs and trees. Over time, these wetlands will grow into fully treed wetlands with a towering canopy of species such as Bur and Swamp White Oak.

These wetlands are bringing life back to the area that otherwise would not be able to survive.

Example of a recently restored wetland

## THE BIG PICTURE

### COMMUNITY

Landscape level projects like this achieve significant improvements to public green spaces benefiting local communities. The revitalization plan of this new public space will provide ample benefits to the natural environment and also provide a new space for the public to enjoy.

### WATER

The project will incorporate vegetated wetland buffers alongside ephemeral and permanent watercourses for headwater streams which have proven to provide the greatest amount of benefit to the watersheds. Water quality will be improved for Grindstone Creek and North Cootes Paradise by reducing sedimentation, decreasing peak flows and downstream erosion, increasing baseflows and infiltration. Water quality will improve through the reduction of phosphorus and suspended sediments.

Community volunteers planting wetland oak species

### WILDLIFE

Wetland restoration at the property is located within 500 metres of Lake Ontario, increasing the amount of near-coastal wetlands and providing linkage habitat for breeding waterfowl and amphibian populations. The project will also provide recovery actions to improve and sustain species at risk habitat for Mottled Duskywing (Endangered), Western Chorus Frog (Threatened), Barn Swallow (Threatened), and Eastern Wood-pewee (Special Concern).

## FUTURE PUBLIC ACCESS

The Hopkins Tract will provide valuable opportunities through a passive trail system. Conservation Halton, with its partners, will be working to implement the visitor access to this new natural area.

## SUPPORTING POLICIES AND PLANS

This project supports and implements initiatives which contribute to the following:

- Conservation Halton Strategic Plan
- City of Hamilton Natural Heritage System
- Ontario Greenbelt Natural Heritage System
- Wetland Conservation Strategy for Ontario
- Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System
- Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan

Oak Ravine Forest and Provincially Rare Rue-Anemone Wildflower

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