

MEDIA RELEASE

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Restore Your Shore Project for Callander Bay-Wasi Watershed Offers Plants to Shoreline Residents to Help Protect Water Quality

(North Bay, April 30, 2015) Shoreline and stream bank property owners in the Callander Bay-Wasi watershed can take part in a free shoreline planting program whose ultimate goal is to help prevent the growth of blue green algae in the watershed.

The Callander-Wasi watershed flows through the municipalities of Callander, Chisholm, East Ferris, North Bay and Powassan who are working together, with the help of the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA), to prevent phosphorus from entering the waterways.

Mayors Hec Lavigne (Callander), Leo Jobin (Chisholm), Bill Vrebosch (East Ferris) and Al McDonald (North Bay) were joined by NBMCA Board Vice Chair Chris Mayne and Source Protection Committee Chair Jeff Celentano at the official launch of the program today at Callander Bay beach, one of several planned demonstration sites that will help promote shoreline restoration.

“Phosphorus contributes to the growth of blue-green algae. That’s not only a threat to the municipal drinking water for Callander – it also impacts the water quality for everyone who swims, fishes and draws their drinking water from the lakes and streams in this watershed. It also affects the habitat for fish and wildlife,” said Dave Mendicino, Chair of the NBMCA.

One way that phosphorus makes its way into the waterways is through soil erosion. Natural shoreline vegetation is an effective and inexpensive way to control erosion.

“We also want to increase the public’s awareness of the connection between phosphorus, erosion and algae,” added Mendicino.

There are 600 urban, rural, agricultural, and cottage properties along the waterways in the Callander-Wasi watershed which includes Callander Bay, Wasi Lake, Graham Lake as well as Wasi River, Graham Creek, Chiswick Creek, Windsor Creek, Burford Creek and the tributaries which feed these waterways. Property owners along these waterways are eligible for a free consultation with NBMCA’s Restore Your Shore program staff.

“The goal of Restore Your Shore is to reach out to at least 100 property owners this year, develop 50 planting plans for those property owners, and plant at least 30 shoreline properties with 10,000 trees and shrubs to help protect the water quality,” said Sue Buckle, NBMCA’s Supervisor of Communications and Outreach.

“NBMCA’s Restore Your Shore program staff Peggy Walsh Craig and Tim Martens will work with property owners to develop a planting plan that not only helps prevent erosion and runoff but takes into consideration the preferences of the landowners for aesthetics, access to their shoreline and maintaining their waterfront view,” she added.

Landowners who agree to the planting plan will be provided with trees, shrubs and plants and will be asked for a commitment to maintain the plantings for five years. There is also assistance available to do the planting.

...2

A multi-stakeholder advisory group consisting of municipal, agricultural, rural, urban, community and agency representatives throughout the watershed helped develop the Restore Your Shore program. Input was also gathered through a variety of focus groups and community surveys.

Funding for the 2015 Restore Your Shore program has been provided by the municipalities with funds from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. Additional grant funding is provided by the Great Lakes Community Guardian Fund, as well as the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council.

Restore Your Shore was developed in response to the North Bay-Mattawa Drinking Water Source Protection Plan which required the development of an education and outreach program to address the threat of blue green algae toxins to Callander's municipal drinking water supply.

Interested Callander-Wasi watershed property owners can contact Peggy Walsh Craig, Restore Your Shore Coordinator at 705 474-5420 or email peggywc@nbmca.on.ca or visit www.restoreyourshore.ca.

The North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority was founded in 1972 by the Province of Ontario and its 10 member municipalities. A non-profit organization, the NBMCA works closely with the public to balance human needs with environmental needs throughout the region's watershed. The NBMCA is one of 36 Conservation Authorities who are members of Conservation Ontario.

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-30-

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