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Media Release

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For immediate release

VOLUNTEERS CHECK THE HEALTH OF WILMOT CREEK

The first ever “Check Your Watershed Day”, held on July 22, 2006, attracted more people than expected, all eager to investigate the health of Wilmot Creek. “We were pleasantly surprised by the turnout”, says Joyce Chau, program manager with Citizens’ Environment Watch. “Everyone had a good time - there was lots of energy.”

The volunteers collected valuable data about small streams in order to better understand the overall health of the Wilmot Creek watershed. “Every little watercourse is important,” explained one volunteer. Small streams are important indicators of watershed health but are typically overlooked in monitoring. Wilmot Creek was chosen as the inaugural watershed for a project that is expected to expand across the Oak Ridges Moraine and beyond.

Participants were taught how to properly collect stream flow data using simple standardized methods. “The enthusiasm was inspiring,” says Chau. “People were piqued enough to hold onto their maps and do some more monitoring outside the event. In fact, they found new culverts and streams that weren’t documented on their maps.”

All of the volunteers had positive comments about their experience. One commented that, “[i]t is nice to participate in an event where individual citizens work as a group with a common short-term objective and a longer term goal.” Another expressed a sense of empowerment: “[We are] keeping track of the environment without big technology. People can do things to help. [I] felt I did something that was worthwhile.”

All of the volunteers who participated in this pilot project not only contributed important research data, they also provided insight into improvements that can be made to make future “Check Your Watershed Day” events even more successful.

“Check Your Watershed Day” is a collaboration between Monitoring the Moraine Project partners: Citizens’ Environment Watch, Save the Oak Ridges Moraine (STORM) Coalition and Centre for Community Mapping; O.F.A.H.’s Community Stream Steward Program; Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority; the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; and Durham Land Stewardship Council.

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citizens'environmentwatch



Save The Oak Ridges Moraine