



Cover crops protect and enrich the soil and help to improve water quality.

NEXT STEPS

Together we can improve watershed health. We must focus our actions on saving natural areas, seeding (e.g., planting trees, native gardens), and being environmental stewards by using best rural or urban land use practices (Carolinian Canada 2017). These approaches can be applied at different scales such as your own backyard, local creek, subwatershed, and Lake Huron. The ‘Thumbs Up’ projects in the subwatershed report cards highlight individuals and groups making a difference. Here are actions all of us can take as an individual, community organization, or agency:

What can you do?

On your farm or rural property

- Use conservation tillage, rotate crops, leave crop residue, and plant cover crops
- Install berms and grassed waterways
- Plant row crops across the hillside slope on erosion-prone soils
- Restrict livestock access from waterways
- Balance nutrient application and crop requirements; use 4R nutrient stewardship (the right fertilizer source at the right rate, at the right time and in the right places)
- Plant vegetation to buffer watercourses, and naturalize part of your property

- Properly decommission abandoned wells
- Inspect and pump out your septic system every three to five years
- Balance nutrient application and crop requirements
- Connect small woodlots to larger tracts, square up existing woodlots, re-forest marginal farmland, and plant windbreaks
- Join the Huron-Perth Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association to help you manage your woodlot
- Visit Huronview Demonstration farm in Clinton, Ontario to learn about rural BMPs

At your home or cottage

- Install a rain barrel or rain garden (see rain gardens in Bayfield, Clinton, or Hensall)
- Plant trees, shrubs, and a native garden to support wildlife
- Every three to five years, inspect and pump out your septic system
- Be ‘Smart about Salt’ and use a minimum amount of de-icing salt
- Volunteer in programs such as community turtle monitoring or the Volunteer Rain Gauge Network
- Avoid using fertilizers and chemicals on your lawn



Enhancing watershed health helps to preserve habitat for species like Brook Trout.

What can your community do?

- Construct wetlands or water retention areas
- Connect important existing natural areas
- Invite environmental experts as guest speakers at your community organization events
- Improve wastewater treatment plants, local landfill facilities, and stormwater management
- Preserve sand dunes as they provide protection
- Protect wetlands and support purchase of key wetlands to preserve coldwater flow

What can agencies do?

- Promote reintroduction of native species and other forest management practices such as prevention and control of invasive species
- Encourage financial incentive programs, such as County Clean Water projects
- Develop a healthy forest management strategy for remediating impacts of invasive pests
- Evaluate key areas for coldwater fish

- Support water quality monitoring at beaches
- Assess tributaries to determine those most prone to erosion and identify stormwater retention options
- Maintain bio-monitoring programs
- Promote proper electronic and hazardous waste disposal
- Support municipal policies that protect natural areas on a watershed basis
- Protect wetlands and review drainage works to ensure baseflow is not diverted, storage in the wetland is not reduced, and channelization does not reduce habitat features
- Evaluate the effects of nutrient management planning at the watershed scale
- Work with the community to enhance local trail networks
- Encourage innovative, low-maintenance drainage techniques such as two stage ditches in municipal drains
- Re-visit watershed plans; evaluate stewardship efforts and best management practices